

Kings Shall Be Your Foster Fathers

Genesis 47:7-31

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Introduction:

For the last couple of weeks in our sermon series from the book of Genesis, we have been looking at the place of refuge God provides for us as His people.

- Two weeks ago, we saw how the place God provided for his people in the time of Joseph was Egypt.
 - It was there that the Lord called them go, and it was there that He promised to sustain them in the famine and to multiply them greatly.
 - I explained to you that in our day, the visible church in every place is the place that God has provided for us as His people,
 - and that every believer is called by God to unite with a true visible church where the Word of God is preached, worship is practiced according to God's Word, and the discipline He appointed is faithfully carried out.
- Last week, I drew from Joseph's example to see what Christ provides for us in the place that He has appointed for us.
 - First, that we find Jesus to be a mediator with all authority who is totally for us.
 - We have a brother at the right hand of the majesty on high.
 - Second, that our Mediator provides a place for us that is exactly what is best for us.
 - For Jacob's family, it was not the most honoured place in Egypt, but it was Goshen, a land where they could look after their livestock and not be mingled with the Egyptians.
 - We saw how Jesus often keeps us from exalted places in the world, not because He is unable to give us such places, but because such places would be harmful for us as His people.
 - And third, even though it may not look like it, we have the best portion of all.
 - Even though Jacob was dependent on Pharaoh for food in the famine, the reality was that it was Jacob who had the blessing that Pharaoh needed.
 - Jacob had the promises of God, and so it was that when they met, it was not Pharaoh who blessed Jacob, but Jacob who blessed Pharaoh!
 - I pointed out how marvellous that was because, to the world, Pharaoh had everything, but when it came to the blessing of God's kingdom, it was Jacob who had everything!

As we move into today's sermon, I want you to consider how Pharaoh was like a foster father for Jacob and his family—or Israel as they were called.

- God raised up Pharaoh at this time to look after Israel—to provide for them while they grew into a great nation.
- I took that title, *foster father*, from Isaiah 49:22-23 where the LORD prophesies that He will raise up foster fathers in His future kingdom.
 - He speaks of the times in which we live, the times after which Jesus has come, when the church is spreading into the whole world.

- It was a very encouraging passage to the church in Isaiah's day when so many people were not following the Lord, and those who were true felt as if the church was like a barren woman...
- The LORD was telling them that the days were coming when they would marvel at all the children of God and would say, **"Where did all of these come from?"**
- The picture is of people coming to Christ from all nations, as it is today, and their rulers are their foster parents...
 - Isaiah 49:22-23 says: **Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, and set up My standard for the peoples; they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders; ²³ Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers; they shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD, for they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."**

My brothers and sisters, this is the situation that we are in today—

- This situation that Isaiah prophesies is what we have in the world today...
- A situation in which we are among the nations that have now been brought to Christ...
 - And we have our rulers—kings and queens or whatever they call themselves—whom God has placed over us...
 - They are our foster fathers and our nursing mothers—
 - sometimes they are very friendly toward us and sometimes they are not...
 - sometimes they are believers and sometimes they are not...
 - but they are always the ones that God has appointed to look after us in this world.

Today in Genesis 47,

- we want to look at Israel during this time in their history when they were brought under a foster father in Egypt to gain wisdom about our situation.
 - We are going to learn from what is recorded here about how we are to respond when God puts foster fathers and mothers over us today.

I want to begin our scripture reading in Genesis 47:7.

- This overlaps with part of what we read last week.
 - Pharaoh had welcomed Jacob and his family to Egypt and had provided land for them in Goshen—the best of the land for shepherds and herdsmen.
- We will begin with 47:7 where, as we saw last week, Jacob blesses Pharaoh.
 - Please give reverent attention because this is God's precious Word.

Genesis 47:7-31: Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁸ Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How old *are* you?" ⁹ And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have

not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." ¹⁰ So Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. ¹¹ And Joseph situated 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 Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. ¹²

Then Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in *their families*.¹³ Now *there was* no bread in all the land; for the famine *was* very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.¹⁴ And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.¹⁵ So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed."¹⁶ Then Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and I will give you *bread* for your livestock, if the money is gone."¹⁷ So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he fed them with bread *in exchange* for all their livestock that year.¹⁸ When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands.¹⁹ Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give *us* seed, that we may live and not die, that the land may not be desolate."²⁰ Then Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh's.²¹ And as for the people, he moved them

into the cities, from *one* end of the borders of Egypt to the *other* end.²² Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations *allotted to them* by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands.²³ Then Joseph said to the people, "Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, *here is* seed for you, and you shall sow the land.²⁴ And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones."²⁵ So they said, "You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants."²⁶ And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, *that* Pharaoh should have one-fifth, except for the land of the priests only, *which* did not become Pharaoh's.²⁷ So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly.²⁸ And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years.²⁹ When the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "Now if I have found favor in your sight, please put your hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me. Please do not bury me in Egypt,³⁰ but let me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place." And he said, "I will do as you have said."³¹ Then he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him. So Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed.

May God bless His Word to us—both its reading and now its preaching.

What you see in this passage is

- first how Jacob blesses the foster father that God has provided to look after him and his family...
- Then you see how this foster father was himself provided for by God through Joseph, the son of Jacob, who is the saviour both of Egypt (in a way) and Israel.
- And finally you see how Jacob once again shows that his foster father is not his eternal father.

So let's learn how we are to respond to the foster fathers and nursing mothers that the Lord has raised up for us today.

I. First, learn here that as God's people, we are to bless our foster fathers.

A. We see in verses 7-10 how Jacob blesses Pharaoh.

1. This is mentioned twice in this short paragraph about Jacob's meeting with Pharaoh to emphasise it.
 - a. It is striking because Jacob is this poor wrinkled shepherd who is dependent on Pharaoh for bread and land that his family might live and not die...
 - yet, Jacob is the one who blesses Pharaoh instead of the other way around.
 - b. This shows us that although Pharaoh is the one who has the bread,
 - Jacob is the one that has access to the LORD who gave Pharaoh the power to get this bread.
2. Both Pharaoh and Jacob know this.
 - a. God has made this clear to Pharaoh by raising up Jacob's son Joseph to be his prophet and to tell Pharaoh about the famine...
 - and to tell Pharaoh what to do in the famine.
 - Without Joseph, Pharaoh would not be in a position to provide Jacob with bread, and he knows this.
 - b. The foster fathers of God's people do not always know that it is the Lord who has provided for them through the Saviour that He has appointed...
 - But whether they know it or not, He is the one that has raised them up and it is He who gives them the power to get wealth.
 - c. But this Pharaoh in Jacob's day seems to recognise this because he lets Jacob bless him.
 - He knows that he needs the blessing of the Lord.
3. And Jacob especially wants to bless Pharaoh because he knows that God has appointed Pharaoh to provide for his family during this famine.
 - a. His family's survival is dependent on Pharaoh receiving God's blessing.
 - If Pharaoh is not blessed with bread, he will not be able to provide for Israel as their foster father during this famine.
 - So Jacob blesses this Egyptian Pharaoh in humble gratitude.
 - He recognises the kindness of this Pharaoh to his family, which is the family from which the Messiah is to come—
 - Jesus Christ who will bring the ultimate blessing of eternal life to all nations.
 - b. And Jacob also blesses Pharaoh because he wants Pharaoh to trust God for this much more important blessing of eternal life!
 - Jacob knew, and hopefully Pharaoh also knew, that without that blessing, he might have all the bread in the world, but to no ultimate benefit.
 - Jacob knows the promises of God and he blesses Pharaoh with yearnings that Pharaoh might have eternal life.
 - It is my hope that we might see this Pharaoh in heaven.

- B. And that should be our desire for the foster fathers that God gives us today!
- Like Jacob, we should bless them as those who are yearning for their salvation...
1. The Bible commands us repeatedly to seek the blessing of those who rule over us, who are our foster fathers that He has appointed for us.
 - a. We are to love them, even if they are our enemies, and we are to pray for them...
 - and not just for their worldly prosperity so that we can prosper under their care,
 - but we are to pray that God would bless them with His salvation in Jesus Christ—that they might come to know Him!
 - They are our foster fathers and it is our duty to love and to pray for them in this way.
 - b. If you look at 1 Timothy 2, you can see this instruction from our Lord through the Apostle Paul...
 - He says: **1 Tim 2:1-5: Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. ³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,**
 - 1) You see how it is in part that we pray for their blessing that we, the church, might flourish under their care and government...
 - that we might lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence under their wise and prosperous government...
 - 2) But it also emphasises that we are to pray for that they would be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth!
 - God desires that all men—that is, all kinds of men—be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth about Jesus as the only saviour and as the only way for them to be saved.
 - God does not have one way for one person and another way for another person—but only through Jesus the only mediator between God and man.
 - And we are to yearn to see our leaders come to know Him—even if they seem far from the LORD as no doubt the emperor of Rome was when Paul told Timothy to lead the church in praying for his salvation.
- So it is God’s will for you to bless those who rule over you as kings and rulers.
2. You have access to the God who not only prospers them in their kingdom, but who also has brought eternal life to all nations through Jesus Christ.
 - You are to pray for them, as Paul says, and if you should be given the opportunity, you should pray for them when you meet them!
 - We had our MLA Iain Rankin visit the other day, and it occurred to me that I should have offered to pray for him.
 - I have something that he desperately needs!
 - Perhaps he would have let me ask a blessing for him.

3. And of course you should also pray for others God has put over you to take care of you in this world...
 - Your parents, your elders in the church, even your big brothers and sisters if you have them.
 - And for your employers...
 - Ask them if you can pray for them—
 - Tell them—if they will let you—how much you desire for them to have God’s blessing on their business and in their own lives...
 - And even if they are not someone you think would receive such an invitation, do not neglect to pray for them in secret regularly!

TRANS> And now I want to move on to the second thing we are taught here about those God has put over us as our foster fathers...

- In this second point, we are not taught by the example of Jacob;
 - but we are shown through Joseph how Jesus preserves our foster fathers...
 - Joseph is presented to us in way that casts light for us on how Jesus reigns.
 - So I will express the second point like this...

II. Secondly, admire the way our Lord Jesus governs our foster fathers.

A. Know that Jesus has been given authority to govern the kings and kingdoms of this world for the benefit of the church—and that is just what He is doing!

1. This is taught in Ephesians 1 which I read to you earlier.
 - In verse 20, it says that God has **“raised Him [Jesus] from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.”**
 - And then in verse 22, it says: **“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”**
 - I hope it thrills your soul to think that—I hope it gives you goosebumps.
 - a. Did you hear that? *All things have been put under His feet...*
 - *He is head over all things for the sake of the church*
 - He is the head of the church—yes indeed—but He is also the head over all things (principalities and powers, all might and dominion) *for* the church.
 - b. Jesus is in the position that belongs to the most high God alone!
 - The position that Nebuchadnezzar, the great king of Babylon, was finally brought to confess after God brought him through a humiliating ordeal...
 - **Daniel 4:34-35: And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. ³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, “What have You done?”**

- c. In the Old Testament, the LORD is pictured as the one who comes in the clouds of heaven to raise up kingdoms and to put down kingdoms at His pleasure—
 - When Jesus was brought before the chief priests and elders, He claimed that they would see Him do this!
 - In Mark 14:61-64, it tells us: **Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”** ⁶² Jesus said, **“I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”** ⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, **“What further need do we have of witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?”** And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.
 - 2. This is the place that belongs only to deity, and Jesus Christ who walked in this world with us and was crucified is there reigning for us...
 - Though He came in our flesh, He is reigning over all things for the sake of the church!
 - The Son of God became flesh for us and now in our flesh, He is raised to sit in that place as our mediator!
 - He has power to raise up nations and to put down nations, and He constantly exercises this power for the sake of the church.
- B. As we look at Joseph, we see how he governs Egypt for the sake of Israel.
- Joseph gives us insight about how Christ rules the kingdoms of this world.
 - 1. Last week, we saw that even though Joseph had authority to give his brothers the highest seats in the government, in wisdom he did not do this.
 - He did not give them such places because that would not have been best for them.
 - Instead he gave them a good land where they could continue their work as shepherds and herdsmen.
 - This work was not an honourable work to the Egyptians, but it had the benefit of keeping Israel as a separate people from the Egyptians so they could continue to serve God as the distinct nation that God had called them to be.
 - If they had been given positions in the government, they would have mingled with the Egyptians.
 - We admired how Joseph governed in this matter, and it led us to admire how Jesus governs us in the world today.
 - As we follow Him, it means that there are things we cannot do in the world—like be a pro ball player because we would have to play on the Lord’s Day to do that.
 - This is not a bad thing for us, but a good thing.
 - 2. And now, this week, we are shown how Joseph not only governs Israel, but also Egypt for the sake of Israel...in two wonderful ways...
 - Of course Joseph does not do his governing by divine power, but by the measured authority he had been given—what we see though is his wisdom that is like the wisdom of Christ.

- a. First, he governs them in such a way that they have bread in the famine.
 - It is now two or three years into the famine, and we are told in verse 13 that **there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.**
 - 1) People were dying of starvation and Israel would have died too if God had not provided a way for them to have bread...
 - And the way He provided was through Joseph.
 - It was to Joseph that God revealed the meaning of Pharaoh's dream that there would be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine...
 - And it was Joseph that God raised up to rule next to Pharaoh so that he could, by the wisdom that God gave him, lead Egypt through these years so that they had bread.
 - This chapter shows us how Joseph had bread in Pharaoh's storehouses when everyone else was out of bread.
 - 2) God arranged it in this way, yes, so that Egypt could survive, but even more so that Egypt could provide for Israel... the people God had chosen to His salvation into the world.
 - They were His people to whom He had made solemn covenant promises to be their God and to preserve them that they might be His people and that they might bless the nations with His salvation in Jesus Christ.
 - Today, it is to all those who are in Christ in the church.
- b. Secondly, Joseph governs Egypt at this time in such a way that Pharaoh is strengthened and all the great families in Egypt are weakened.
 - 1) You can see who the people of Egypt run out of bread in the first couple of years of the famine...
 - Then they run out of money in the next few years buying bread from Joseph.
 - Then they transfer the ownership of their farm animals over to Pharaoh in exchange for bread...
 - And finally they sell their land and themselves as slaves to Pharaoh in for bread.
 - 2) This may seem cruel to us, but we need to understand that it did not seem cruel to the Egyptians at all!
 - a) We tend to associate slavery with the kind of slavery in which people are kidnapped and put to forced labour against their will.
 - But they volunteered for this slavery...
 - In verse 18, it says: **When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. 19 "Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give us seed, that we may live and not die, that the land**

may not be desolate." 20 Then Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh's.

b) And Joseph does not oppress them at all...

- Knowing that the famine is over, he sets them up as tenant farmers and only requires that they return one fifth of their of their produce and keep the remaining four fifths for themselves.
- This was in a day when records have been found showing rates of one third, one half, two thirds, and even four fifths were required from tenant farmers.
- Besides that, this measure likely took a lot of the Egyptians out of oppressive slavery and made them into tenant farmers.
- You see how they respond in verse 25: **So they said, "You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants."**
- They are happy with what Joseph has done.

3) But it seems that we are told about this transference of power for a reason related to God's care of Israel through Joseph's wisdom...

a) After telling us about this redistribution of power in Egypt, it says in verse 27, as if it is a consequence of what Joseph has done with the Egyptians:

- **v. 27: So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly.**
- Beautiful years of prosperity followed for Israel so that they multiplied as God had promised...
 - And it seems that the way Joseph governed Egypt in the famine contributed to this prosperity.
 - Not only that they were given bread, but also in the way that power was transferred to Pharaoh.

➤ What might this have done? What did this mean for them?

b) This meant that Pharaoh had authority to set Israel up in Goshen without anyone coming to oppose him.

- Because the great families of Egypt had been weakened, they were in no position to rise up against Jacob's family as they might have done if there had been no famine.
- Israel was able to live in peace and quietness and prosper and grow without anyone molesting them under the favour of their foster father, Pharaoh.

c) And that is not quite all that this transfer of power to Pharaoh accomplished as far as God's purposes for Israel...

- It also meant that in future years when a Pharaoh arose who did not know Joseph,
 - that that Pharaoh was in such a position of power and authority that he could oppress Israel and nobody could stop him.

- The LORD tells that wicked Pharaoh himself that He raised him up on purpose to make His power known!
 - God deliberately gave Pharaoh great power so that nobody on earth could challenge him or stop him so that the LORD could reveal to His people that He was LORD over Pharaoh!
 - If Pharaoh had been weak, no one would have been impressed—
 - and you see, in our fallen estate, we can't just be told about the glory and majesty and power of God—we have to be shown that it is so.

TRANS> So the LORD knew what He was doing when He gave Pharaoh such power...

- In the earlier years, that Pharaoh might protect Israel so that they might multiply in the magnificent way that they did—
 - It was one of the many threads of God's sovereignty that worked together in order to make that happen...
- And in later years, that Pharaoh might be a powerful oppressor that seemed completely unstoppable so that God might teach His people (and us) of His power to deliver us...
 - This was a lesson we had to learn that we might trust Him even to save us from our sins—and from the power of Satan and the world at the last day!

TRANS> So what do we learn from this passage?

- C. We learn that our Lord Jesus, who has all authority to govern the nations, governs them for the sake of the church.
1. We can be confident that when rulers are raised up, no matter what kind of rulers they may be,
 - Our wise Lord Jesus has raised them up for the sake of the church.
 - We do not need to be afraid—even if the mountains are cast into the midst of the sea—our hope is in our mighty Saviour.
 - He will accomplish all that He has promised us—not one promise will fail.
 - He will reign in such a way that He graciously teaches us and guides us and chastens us shapes us so that we learn of Him.
 2. And all the while, it is our duty to pray for those who govern us...
 - To pray and to seek God's salvation for them.
 - To pray and labour that we might be a blessing.
 - And to thank God for them as our foster fathers whom God has given us until we go to be with Him in glory.
 - We are flourishing under them just as Israel flourished in Egypt under Pharaoh as their foster father until the time came for God to deliver them.

TRANS> And that calls to mind the third thing I want to show you from this passage...

III. Thirdly, see here how important it is to remember that our foster fathers are only provisional fathers.

- A. Jacob gives strong testimony to his sons that Egypt is not their final resting place and that Pharaoh is only their foster father.

1. He makes Joseph solemnly swear that he will bury him in the land of Canaan.
 - See verse 29-31: **When the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “Now if I have found favor in your sight, please put your hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me. Please do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰ but let me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place.” And he said, “I will do as you have said.” ³¹ Then he said, “Swear to me.” And he swore to him.**
 2. Jacob does not do this because of mere sentiment or superstition.
 - a. He does it because of the promises of God to him and to his fathers.
 - He does not want to be buried in Egypt because Egypt is only the place where Israel is to multiply.
 - They are only to be there for a while.
 - Egypt is the place where Israel is to multiply,
 - but Canaan is the place where God is to establish His kingdom and bring forth the Messiah.
 - b. By being buried there, Jacob’s sons would be reminded of the promise over the next generations as conditions worsened in Egypt.
 - God had already revealed that they would be brought into bondage and that He would then deliver them...
 - And they needed this promise to stay alive over the years.
 - Jacob was testifying of his hope in God’s promises to his sons.
 3. Now you might ask, “How would such a promise help if you were in one of those generations that lived and died as slaves in Egypt?”
 - a. It would help in the same way that it would help Jacob.
 - He knew that the salvation that God was bringing through his household was an eternal salvation.
 - He knew that even though he died in Egypt and even though his fathers Abraham and Isaac died without inheriting Canaan...
 - that God would raise them up to inherit it in the future.
 - b. Jacob knew that all the years until the final resurrection at the last day were to prepare us for the city of God that is eternal in the heavens—heaven being in the place where God’s presence is revealed.
 - He was teaching his sons to put their hope in the resurrection as he and his fathers had done...
- B. And this lesson ought to come to you, dear brothers and sisters, with even more forcefulness than it came to Jacob’s sons!
1. God gives us our place in this world, often under rulers who serve as our foster fathers,
 - And we are thankful for them, and we are thankful for the church and how Christ has provided for it for us to grow in His grace and to multiply in number.

2. We have even more reason to be thankful because we have seen much more of God's wonderful plan.
 - We have seen how God did bring Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand and show that He was LORD...
 - And we have seen how He established them as His people and gave them His laws and set up worship that showed more clearly than ever before that He would provide a sacrifice to take away their sin...
 - And we have seen, thanks be to God, the coming of the LORD Jesus Christ and how He Himself was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
 - And we have seen how in our flesh, having borne our sin, He was raised to sit in that divine place of power where He promises to reign over all things for us until He has put all of His enemies under His feet...
 - And we have seen how the blessing has spread to all the nations...
 - And most all of us are from those nations that were cut off from God but that have been brought near by the blood of Christ and joined to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to wait for God's final promise from heaven.
3. Of all people, living in these days, we should not be afraid!
 - Of all people, we should be confident that our LORD Jesus Christ is reigning over all for us and that He will not fail to accomplish His purpose for us.
 - Let us lay down our lives for Him!
 - Let us die with Him that we may live with Him!
 - Let us put away our pride and our selfishness and start loving one another as He has loved us.
 - And above all, let us love Him who is risen and reigning for us, using the kings of this world to be our foster fathers until He comes.
 - Then we will be brought to our final rest!
 - Then we will see Him whom our soul loves and we will love Him more than ever and we will be with Him in glory forever and ever.