

EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

Message #105

Genesis 50:22-26

The opening book of the Bible, Genesis, is a book of beginnings. Many things have their Origin in Genesis: the heavens and earth, light, Vegetation, time, birds, fish, various animals and of course man and woman. In Genesis we see the beginning of life and the beginning of death. Genesis opens with God creating life and it closes with God taking life. Genesis begins with creation and it ends in a coffin.

As we have journeyed through Genesis, we have noticed that to the people of Abraham, there is a peculiar emphasis on a promised land. Right from the opening scene with Abraham we see that God has promised Abraham and his seed a land (**Genesis 12:1**). Over and over again this land theme is emphasized to Abraham (**12:7; 13:15; 15:18-21; 17:8**). It was emphasized to Isaac (**26:3**) and to Jacob (**28:13; 31:3, 13**). This is a very important Genesis theme - a promised land for Israel.

As the book of Genesis closes, we not only witness another death, but another emphasis of that promised land. Even though Joseph had been dramatically used and blessed by God in Egypt, he knew, based on God's word and his father Jacob, that Egypt was not his home, but one day Israel would be given her promised land in Canaan.

God had clearly predicted that Israel would be in captivity to the Egyptians (**Genesis 15:7-16**). When Genesis was being written by Moses, he had led Israel out of a 400 plus year captivity and many of the Israelites actually thought it would be better to stay in Egypt (Exodus 16:3). In fact, "the whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness" (Exodus 16:2). Moses knew that this first book of the Bible, Genesis, would give these Israelites much needed information about their promised land. It was a book designed to keep Israel focused on her future promised land and that theme surfaces as Genesis comes to a close.

Joseph had lived a dramatic and an amazing life. God did incredible things with him. At one time he was hated by his family and now he was loved by the world. He had gone from being a prisoner to prime minister; from the lowest slave to the highest superior. Joseph went to Egypt when he was 17 years old (37:2) and he died in Egypt when he was 110 years old (**50:22, 26**). In those 93 years he had gone from the bottom of the Egyptian world to the top. It is an amazing story of an amazing life. But with all of Joseph's success, he never forgot God's Word and he never forgot about Israel's promised land.

NO MATTER HOW SUCCESSFUL OR PROSPEROUS ONE IS IN THIS LIFE, THOSE WHO ARE GREAT IN GOD'S SIGHT KEEP THEIR FOCUS ON HIS WORD AND THEIR ETERNAL FUTURE UNTIL THE MOMENT OF DEATH.

It is significant to see that what puts Joseph in the great faith chapter of Hebrews 11 (11:22) was not his success in life, but his request at death.

FACT #1 - Joseph lived a long life in Egypt. **50:22**

Joseph spent 93 years in Egypt. He first went there at age 17; he was promoted at age 30 (**41:46**), which means he enjoyed a prestigious life in Egypt for 80 years (110 minus 30 = 80). God dramatically blessed Joseph for 86 percent of his Egyptian residency.

FACT #2 - Joseph lived an impacting life in Egypt. **50:23**

Joseph lived to make a difference in God's family, Israel. He lived to see the grandchildren of Ephraim and Manasseh, which means Joseph lived to see his great-grandchildren. Machir, who is named in this verse, was the first born of Manasseh, who was the firstborn of Joseph (Joshua 17: 1). Machir was not full Israeli because Manasseh was part Jewish and part Egyptian (**Genesis 41:50-51**). However, Machir was one who would fight for the promised land (Joshua 17:1) and by faith he kept focused on it and shared and will share in the inheritance of it (Numbers 26:29; 32:39-40; Deuteronomy 3:15; Revelation 7:6). When the text says that they were "born on Joseph's knees", this not only implies a nice family environment, but a Biblical education. Joseph, who could have retired and enjoyed a good life, was actively involved in the lives of his children and their children, especially in teaching them the things of God.

FACT #3 - Joseph lived a prophetic life in Egypt. **50:24**

Joseph knew the prophetic program of God and he stayed focused on it until the moment of his death. He believed that one day God would literally give Israel her land.

FACT #4 - Joseph lived a focused life. **50:25**

The fact that Joseph wanted his bones carried to the promised land tells us that in spite of his position, power and prosperity, he was focused on the Word of God until the moment of his death.

FACT #5 - Joseph died an honored man. **50:26**

When we read this last verse of Genesis we cannot help but realize we have covered a very unusual story. We have gone from Eden to embalming. We have gone from creation of new life to the loss of an old life. Genesis is a book that tells us something went wrong with creation and the problem was sin. As remarkable a man that Joseph was, as godly a man as he was, as impacting a man as he was, he still had to die because he was a sinner.

No matter who we are, or how important we may think we are in our world, death will track us down and that message starts in Genesis. Death finally caught up with Joseph but because he kept his focus on God and His Word, Joseph's death ends up meaning he was promoted in glory.