

Faithful to the End

Genesis 50:22-26, Sunday AM, August 20, 2023

Prelude – Scripture: Genesis 50:7–26 So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ and all the household of Joseph and his brothers and his father's household; they left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen. ⁹ There also went up with him both chariots and horsemen; and it was a very great company. ¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed seven days mourning for his father. ¹¹ Now when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians." Therefore it was named Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan. ¹² Thus his sons did for him as he had charged them; ¹³ for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field for a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. ¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father. ¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!" ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father charged before he died, saying, 'Thus you shall say to Joseph, "Please forgive me, for I have sinned against you and your brothers. For they did you wrong." ' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁷ Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁸ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place?" ¹⁹ "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. ²⁰ "So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. ²¹ Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father's household, and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. ²² Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph's knees. ²³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." ²⁴ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here." ²⁵ So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

So we return to Joseph. I look forward to it, but it's rough because it's hard enough to remember week after week let alone 3-4 times a year. As you have opportunity, you can listen to sermons before on website. We're once again approaching death, but we are also talking about living and future promises that motivate you to fix your eyes beyond yourself. What holds your attention as you face hardship, brokenness, and death? Your source of hope/life determines whether you live looking at brokenness or tragedy OR whether God's transcendent but personal care leads you to trust and obey His word as Pastor Jahn ended last week. Do you want to be faithful in your service to God? Then gaze at our faithful God. God has spoken. He has created. He has good purpose for His creation. He is not tainted by the Fall of man. As one wrote, "While rightly understanding the Fall as a loss, theologians from Ambrose to Augustine to Aquinas to Wycliffe have also named it a 'fortunate fall'—one that reveals God's goodness in a way that human perfection cannot. As John Milton renders the idea in *Paradise Lost*, O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense! That all this good of evil shall produce, and evil turn to good; more wonderful than that which creation first brought forth Light out of darkness." Hannah Anderson Christianity Today Barbie and Ken Go East of Eden 7/27/23 God is Righteous. God RULES. God Loves. God accomplishes His good will, and God has made a way for you to relate to Him as Father rather than foe. THIS stabilizes and lifts our hearts from the natural to the eternal. Sing this reality and praise our holy God!

*Hymn (Powerpoint): Creation Sings

110 years when died—THAT is long. IF you feel older, when did it start? But we are not just talking about death, we are talking about how Joseph lived—right up to the end. He lived faithful to God. We've seen examples of Him trusting God's care as we've followed him from his home to Egypt—from Potiphar's house, to the Prison, to Pharaoh's Palace. But what about all the unspoken for years and events? We just expect him to be faithful to God—why? Because his trust in God went beyond his immediate circumstances and was bound by past acts of faithfulness, current responsibilities resulting from a reverence of God, and future promises for God's people. So as Joseph comes to die, he doesn't look for people to care for him—doesn't shrink his world to his life, his pain, his needs—He proclaims God's care to those who trusted in him for protection and provision. ²⁴ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." Sing the nearness, yet mystery of God's providential care.

*Hymn #46: God Leads Us Along

*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn D Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11 (NASB95) But we do not want you to be

uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words. ¹ Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. ³ While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

Offering: *Doxology:

Swear to me—take my bones from Egypt. Why? because God has promised. It is not for now, but will come. Look at my bones. Don't bury them. Remember that you will leave here. Don't be tied to Egypt. And so we were reminded in our passage from I Thessalonians, don't focus on death as the end. Judgment results in eternal wrath for those not born again, those not "in Christ," those not living for Him, longing for His return. But for those who tremble at His words and respond to His means of salvation, we've been promised life with our living Lord. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort, encourage, build up one another with these words Sing this old song.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): This World is Not My Home

Eyes fixed on God—because trust His word, because He IS and rewards those who diligently seek Him. Those with this posture will be faithful. If Jesus doesn't hold your attention—doesn't seem good, then you don't want fellowship with God. You want something else. Ask God to expose those other desires, and whet your appetite for what He gives--meaning, communion, stability, purpose, love, truth. Then you will fight for faith in future grace and live for Him alone.

*Hymn #368: All for Jesus

Message: Faithful to the End Genesis 50:22-26 *Hymn #43: Great is Thy Faithfulness Prayer