

The End - Genesis 50:1-26

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning, everybody. Turn your Bibles to Genesis chapter 50. The title of today's message is The End. It's the end of Genesis.

18 months in Genesis. It's become a very comfortable feeling knowing I'm in Genesis, knowing we're in this narrative and this flow and this story and this work of God.

To come to the end of it is exciting, but also a little bittersweet. But God is so good. He's so good that the end is never the end with God.

That's what we're going to look at today. That the end is just another opportunity for a new beginning. So we've come to chapter 50, 50 books in Genesis.

We saw the beginning, the beginning of everything, the beginning of creation, the beginning of the world. We saw the beginning of the sun, the moon, the stars. We saw the beginning of man.

[0 : 5 7] We saw the beginning of that age of innocence, right? That era in the garden. And then we saw the end of that. The end of that just started a new beginning, a beginning of the work of God's redemption in this world, which we are still partaking of today in that beginning.

We saw that age of kind of man's conscience before the flood. They just lived according to what was right in their own eyes. And then we kind of came to the end of that too. God brought that to an abrupt end with the flood.

And that started something new where we have the age, we got into then the age of promise, where God came and spoke to a man, Abraham, and said, Abraham, out of all the people of the world, I'm going to bring my promise through you.

And we're going to have a covenant, a covenant that's one-sided where God says, it doesn't matter, Abraham. It's not about you. It's not about your ability. I'm going to keep my promise to you. What was Abraham's part?

Man, he had to receive it. He believed God and God accounted to him for righteousness. And we've been in that season, the season of the patriarchs, that era of promise. That's coming to an end.

[2 : 0 0] It's coming to an end. We're going to then move into Exodus, where we start the beginning of a new era, which is the era of God's law, where then God begins to make a nation. And so we transition today as Jacob goes off the scene.

And all of a sudden, Israel is no longer a man. Now Israel is a people group that God begins to work through. For us, we're in whatever era we're in, in our lives, right?

I just met a few of you today for the first time. I don't know where you're at in your life. You're at a different stage in your life than I am, but we're each in a different stage of life that's going to have a beginning or an ending.

My wife and I talk about how we say we've lived through many ages of Middle Earth. So if you've read or watched Lord of the Rings, there's different ages. And it's like, man, we've had like five different ages that we've lived through.

We're raising our kids in New York and then different seasons of living there. And then before we were married and in college. And then down here, we've had like three different lives down here, it feels like.

[3 : 02] It just seems like, remember that? No, I don't. It seems so long ago. So we've been here eight and a half years and it feels like a lifetime in a good way. So that will all end at some point for all of us.

We're all going to get to a point where this season comes to an end. And we're either going to be taken up in the rapture, hopefully, or we will go to meet the Lord in our own personal rapture when he comes for us individually.

And Jesus in John 11 is addressing this. We're going to look at a couple different verses. We go through this chapter, bouncing back to John 11, what Jesus said there. Remember, Lazarus had died.

And Jesus waits until he's dead specifically because he wants to show the people that he's the resurrection of the life. And he goes back and Martha and Mary, they're all distraught. And Jesus said to Martha, your brother will rise again.

This isn't the end, Martha. There's a beginning. And she said, yes, Lord, I know he'll rise again at the end. And then Jesus says this unto her. He said, I am the resurrection and the life.

[4 : 10] He that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? Martha, I'm the beginning of every end.

And everybody who puts their trust in me never has an end. It's only a beginning. Every end is just another beginning. We're going to see today in this section of Scripture, we're going to see Jacob's funeral.

And it is, I believe, is the most complete description of like a funeral in Scripture. There's other times when people die. There's that time where Jesus meets the young man who died and they're bringing him out of the city and he raises him up.

But this is a very descriptive description of this funeral. And ironically, I've done quite a number of funerals in my short time being a pastor.

I had a brother in the Lord that I knew and he needed someone to do funerals. He ran a funeral home. So I've done about half a dozen funerals for people I don't know. Unfortunately, in the world we live in today, so many people are not connected with a church that when a loved one passes on, they don't know what to do.

[5 : 18] So they go to the funeral home and say, hey, give me a service. And so I was able to do a number of different funerals for people. And one of the things to the hope that we have that we can give people who are sitting there and they don't know what's going on is that death is never meant to be the end.

Death is just meant to be a doorway into resurrected life. That in Christ, it is not the end. We just step through into a new beginning. And in that moment, people are very open.

And it's just been a cool way God has given me to preach the gospel. But anyway, if you remember in Genesis 28, Jacob has received this promise from the Lord back when he was first running from Hebron to Haran.

And we've looked at this promise many times. Behold, I, the Lord, am with you and will keep you in all places where you go. And I'll bring you again into this land, for I'll not leave you until I've done that which I've spoken of to you.

And here we see as Jacob passes off the scene, he can say, God has done this. For me. God's faithfulness to Jacob, we said last week, means God's faithfulness to me.

[6 : 27] If God has been faithful to Jacob, then he will be faithful to us. We fall under the same promise as heirs of faith with Abraham. Isaiah 44, verse 6, we read, Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the first and I am the last, and beside me there is no God.

Every ending and every beginning, God is already there. He's the first and he is the last. And then reiterated in Revelation, that same idea, Revelation 22, 13, Jesus says, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Every end is just another opportunity for a new beginning. And so as we end this book, as we end this era, it's just an opportunity for God to do something new.

Let's dive in. Verse 1. And Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept upon him and kissed him. And this is coming hard on the heels of last week, where Jacob gives the blessing, blessing, the prophecy to his sons.

Some of his sons probably didn't feel too blessed, but like we said, the truth is always a blessing. God's truth, no matter how hard it is to receive, is always a blessing. And so Joseph now, as his father dies, able to be there to see his father pass on into glory, thinking never going to see his dad again, never again would he see his family.

[7 : 52] And now he's had 17 years with him. And he falls upon his face and weeps. And so here we see Joseph, our picture, our foreshadowing of Christ, that type of Jesus, the son, the son of favor, as his father passes off the scene.

We see the love of the son continues beyond death. And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father. And the physicians embalmed Israel.

I'm not going to put any pictures up that show what embalming is. I've read a bunch about it. It was messy. So in Egypt, you think, why did they do all this embalming? Now, it had to do with their religion, for sure.

They believed they were preserving the bodies for the afterlife. That, well, you had to have a body in the afterlife. So that's why they would also embalm your horse. You'd have horses that were mummified.

Your cat might be there. Your whole family, your whole servants, everything's there for the afterlife. But it's also practical. Remember where Egypt was situated, at the delta to the Nile.

[8 : 50] And so Egypt lived and died by the flooding of the Nile. And they would irrigate their land that way. And they would survive because of the flooding of the Nile. So you couldn't exactly have a lot of cemeteries that would then get flooded.

And then you'd irrigate your crops. It just didn't work. So they embalmed them. And that was an interesting process. And we're going to see a little more about that. The scripture is going to actually describe some of that.

But the idea was then they would preserve the bodies in a way that they could then bury them safely in sarcophaguses or wherever. But here you see Joseph partaking in the same thing.

And Joseph now commands these servants, the physicians. And here the word of the son is commanding beyond death. And he's also preparing here a body for the afterlife. Is he doing it with the same mindset as the Egyptians?

No. Not at all. Right? The Egyptians thought we've got to keep this thing around for centuries and centuries. It's got to be preserved in case someone needs it again. Well, that's not the way we think, is it?

[9 : 55] We know that the New Testament tells us that if our earthly house, this tabernacle, were dissolved, meaning our bodies, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

It's not talking about, you know, a four-square wall. It's talking about our bodies. For in this we groan. Some of you groan more than others. Okay? Earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven.

We desire that new body. We desire a body that can interact with Jesus in a way where we can hold him, we can see him, and we can be with him in that way. Jesus would say in John 14, Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God.

Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. Again, that mansion, as we just saw from Corinthians, isn't specifically talking about, you know, a house.

But it's talking about a body, a dwelling place. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also. So God has also prepared a place for us.

[11 : 01] And he also preserves us. We're not mummified, thank the Lord, but he does preserve us. 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 23 says, Who's the one doing that work there?

Not me, thankfully. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. I pray God that he preserve you. God has prepared a place for us, and we can be sure that he's going to come and receive us, and he can preserve us for it.

Thank the Lord it's not on me to preserve myself. And so Joseph does this, and he says in verse 3, And forty days were fulfilled for him, for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed.

Now we've talked before how there's external evidence to the text and internal evidence. We looked at some of the external evidence with the archaeological stuff that's out there, showing that it appears Israel was in Egypt.

We'll see more of that as we get into Exodus. But then there's the internal evidence. Remember when Joseph encountered the butler and the baker and then Pharaoh, and the way they talked about their dreams.

[12 : 12] And they saw themselves in the dream, and that's very big in Egypt. If you had a dream and you saw yourself in it. And also the name Joseph had as governor, the salit. That was a specific word used for the Egyptian governor.

So there's external evidence and internal evidence. This is some more internal evidence. That it was a forty-day process to embalm someone. It was about thirty days, I think it was a thirty-day soak in a brine solution, once all of your internals were removed to preserve you.

And then they would wrap you in a bunch of goo with the mummifying process. And put your internal organs in a jar, seal the jar, and put it in there with you, just in case you needed those in the afterlife too.

And that was their process. Psalm 116 verse 5 says, God has a different view about looking at death, thankfully, than we do, or than this world does.

God looks at it as a very precious thing. It's something to him that is not just something to be entered into lightly. And Joseph here, he partook of the practices of his day regarding the dead, but with a very different perspective, didn't he?

[13 : 21] I don't think he was thinking, I have to preserve my father's body for the afterlife. We're told to have a different perspective on death too. Paul writes, We're not to partake in death in the same way that this world does.

Why? Well, because it doesn't mean the same thing. Death isn't a permanent separation for us. Death is just the beginning of something new that God is going to do. The world attempts to hold on to the things of life, into the next life, don't they?

They say all the time, Well, you can't take it with you. You might as well spend it now or whatever. But they act like they can take it with them. I mean, in Egypt, they literally embalmed their, practically their cars and their iPhones and stuck them in there with them because you might need this someday.

They thought they could take it with them. 1 Timothy 6, 7 says, For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. You just, you can't even take your body with you.

You leave it behind. There is a bookend to life. Everything that happens here in between doesn't go with us. There's nothing from this life I can take with me. But yet from that scripture, I know that I don't stay here, do I?

[14 : 40] It's certain we can carry nothing out, meaning we're going out of this life. We're not going to stay here. Death isn't the end. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 10, That's talking about believers.

That everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad. Now, as a young preteen and teenager growing up in the church, I'd think, oh man, that's it.

I'm going to get in trouble for all the bad things I did all over again. That's not what it means. We're not there to be judged for our sin. That was judged at the cross. It's gone. It's done away. This is the things in our body receiving what we have done, whether good or bad.

In other words, it's all good. Like, we may get a really big prize. We may get a smaller prize. We may get 20 prizes. But it's all a prize. Okay? It's all good that the Lord is going to say, hey, here you go.

This is the reward of the judgment seat of Christ. But what is it based on? It's not just based on, oh, well, I've accepted Christ and I'm in. Right? But it's based on something else because he says here that we're going to receive according to what we've done in this life.

[15 : 51] So I can't carry anything with me. I can't take my favorite water bottle with me or whatever. Right? But I'm going to take the actions I've done. I'm going to take the heart that I've made for myself.

I'm going to take the relationships. Something passes on, but not the things of this world. In Matthew 25, Jesus is speaking and he says, well, he's talking.

He's giving a parable to the landowner. He's gone away and he's come back and he's seen his servant and his servant has been faithful. And his Lord said unto him, well done, good and faithful servant.

That has been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord. So what is it in this life that I carry with me and I stand before Christ and he says, based upon this, man, here's your prize.

It's faithfulness. It's faithfulness. Well done, good and faithful servant. That has been faithful over a few things. How many things do I have to be faithful over? Just a few. Just a few things that God says be faithful over.

[16 : 55] How are we faithful? We're faithful through our faith in him, right? Faith indicates trust in something else. As we put our faith in God, the more we put our faith in him and our trust in him, man, the more I'm able then to be faithful.

Because I can look at a situation and go, well, I don't have any idea what to do with that. But Lord, you know what to do. What do you want me to do in this situation? Oh, just walk through it like this? Well, it doesn't seem like very much, but I can do that.

Go say hi to that person. Tell them Jesus loves them. Okay, I don't really know them, but I'll go do that. That doesn't seem too hard. All right. And then someday he's going to stand there and he's going to say, well done, good and faithful servant.

And you're going to go, who? Not me. I wasn't good and faithful, Lord. No way. He said, oh yeah, you were faithful over a few things. Come on, enter into my joy.

You know, I really don't care about the little prize I get. I want that. I want to enter into the joy of the Lord. And when the days of his mourning were passed, Joseph spoke unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, if now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh.

[18:02] So 70 days were accounted for this mourning at the end of verse 3. I don't think I read that. The Egyptians mourned for him threescore in 10 days. 70 days, that would indicate royalty.

To mourn for someone for that long meant that they were of the place of royalty. And so Joseph was very respected in Egypt. And Joseph now mourns with them.

And at the end of that, Joseph speaks to the house of Pharaoh and says, look, I want you to go to Pharaoh. If I found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh. Why doesn't Joseph just go himself?

Why doesn't he just walk in and be like, hey, you fair? I don't know. What does he call him for short? What's up, bro? You know, me and you, we've been tight for years. I mean, I've run your whole kingdom for you. I've been very fruitful and saved many people alive.

So you kind of owe a lot of what's happened here to me. What's going on? I got a favor to ask you. But here we see Joseph acting with such humility and such grace. It reminds me of when Jesus, speaking to his disciples, when they're kind of jockeying for a position of who's the greatest.

[19:07] He's like, look, fellas, when you are invited to someone's house to a feast, don't try and take the highest position. Now, in that culture, it's very different than our culture. If when we have a fellowship meal, we don't seat each other according to hierarchy.

Right? They did that back then. You would seat someone according to their status. And if you're at the lowest place, you know, okay, well, at least I'm here. So Jesus is saying, never take the highest place because what does that mean?

The only place you can go from there is where? Down. But if you take the lowest, the only place you can go is up. Joseph comes with grace and humility.

He who humbles himself will be exalted. He says, go, I pray, and speak in the ears of Pharaoh. And Joseph's, the foundation for Joseph's request is grace, isn't it?

Joseph is counting on grace for an advocate and a voice before the throne. Saying, go before the throne. Be an advocate for me. We also have an advocate before the throne because of grace.

[20:13] In Hebrews 7.25, we read, Jesus is our advocate that he's there before the throne.

Hebrews 4.16 says, Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. That Jesus is there as our advocate because of grace.

We can have a voice before the throne. We have an advocate before the throne. Joseph is saying, go and be my voice and my advocate before the throne. He says, and speak this to Pharaoh in verse 5.

My father made me swear, saying, lo, I die. In my grave, which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now, therefore, let me go up, I pray thee, Joseph says, and bury my father, and I'll come again.

We find some information about Jacob we didn't know. Jacob says, I have specifically prepared a place for me. I've got a place for me for my death. Jacob was not afraid of death, but he was prepared for it.

[21 : 18] He had a place prepared. And here we see the command of the father and the word of the son. They both transcend death. On the other side of death, we have the command of the father and the word of the son still holding fast.

And Pharaoh said, go up and bury your father, according as he made you swear. Proverbs 16, 7 says, when a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Joseph has experienced this. You think when he was with Potiphar, when he was in prison, and now witnessing this play out in his own life. And being able to turn around as a testimony and to say to someone else, man, just continue to seek the Lord.

Be faithful to him, and God will put you where he wants you to be. Joseph's influence on Pharaoh, that Pharaoh would just turn and say, go up. Bury your father, according as he made you swear.

Go, Joseph. I know you're a man of your word. You have kept your word to me, and you need to keep your word to the father. And I know you'll keep your word, and you'll come back. But Joseph had great influence on Pharaoh, didn't he?

[22 : 24] Pharaoh saw that the spirit of God was with him. Pharaoh knew that Joseph was someone special. He was something more than just an administrator. But it wasn't Joseph's politics or his policy that influenced Pharaoh, was it?

It was his personal integrity. Joseph, when he interpreted the dream for Pharaoh, Pharaoh's like, whoa. And then Joseph says, and do this too. Because there's going to be seven years of good, of plenty, and then seven years of famine.

Look it. During the seven years of plenty, store it up so that you'll have it during the seven years of famine. Now, that doesn't take rocket science, right? Anybody could have come up with that. But Pharaoh didn't go, you know, that's a great idea.

I know someone who could do that. I'm going to call up my cousin, and he's in accounting, and he can come and do this, right? But no, what was it? It was, Joseph, I don't know about all that, but what I see in you is you have the spirit of God.

You have the spirit of God within you. It wasn't your politics or your policy, but it was your personal integrity. And Joseph has this relationship with Pharaoh. It's the same for us.

[23 : 25] We live in this world that pushes hard, especially leading into an election, to know what is your politics and what are your policies? What do you think?

What do you believe? It's like, you know what? We are called in this world to be lights in this world and to one person at a time change this world for Jesus as we change hearts, right?

It's as the heart is changed. It's the personal integrity. It's not our politics and our policies. As we are faithful, we will be an example and a witness to others in our lives of God's faithfulness.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, he said, Be you followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. The result of Joseph's influence was that many would follow him as he goes to honor the Father.

All of Egypt, all of the elders of Egypt and all of the politicians of Egypt, I guess, they all are following Joseph as he goes to honor his father. In 1 John 5, 1, John writes, Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone that loves him that begat, in other words, everyone who loves the Father that begat the Son, loves him also that is begotten of him.

[24 : 43] It's a package deal. You can't have the Father without the Son or the Son without the Father. And so all the house of Joseph and his brothers and his father's house, with all of Pharaoh's court, they all go up, only their little ones and their flocks and their herds.

They left in the land of Goshen. In verse 9 of Genesis 50, And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great company. And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan.

And there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. So they go up. They go up to Canaan, and they return to the promised land, and they stop at the threshing floor of Atad.

Atad means thorn, or a thorn or a briar. And there they mourned. If you look in verse 10, there's three words for mourned. There they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation, and he made a mourning.

Those are three words for grieving, and they're all different. Mourned, the first one, there they mourned, means to beat the breast. It's like the actions of mourning. And the lamentation means to wail.

[25 : 50] It's like the vocal part of mourning. And then it says where they made a great mourning for his father seven days. That's the process, the whole process that encompassed mourning. It's like the funeral, a seven-day funeral.

You know, Joseph, he knew his father would rise again as he puts his mummified body in there with Abraham, Isaac, Sarah, and Leah.

He knows, you know, God will raise my father again. I don't have any reason to cry, right? The promised hope of resurrection takes the sting out of death, doesn't it?

1 Corinthians 15, 55 says, O death, where is your sting? Where is your thorn? As they're here at the threshing floor at a tod, the place of the thorn.

O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. The thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[26 : 48] And that victory is resurrection, right? Resurrection takes the sting out of death, but it doesn't take the pain out of death. It still hurts. And it's okay to mourn, as Jacob is being mourned for for seven days by his family.

A very sore and great mourning. Will we see our loved ones who died in Christ again? Yes, we will. We'll be reunited. But it doesn't take the pain. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of a tod, they said, This is a very grievous mourning to the Egyptians, wherefore the name of it was caused, I'm sorry, it was called Abel Miserim, which is beyond Jordan.

That literally means this is a very great mourning to the Egyptians. That's what they named it. Okay. Ecclesiastes 7.2, Solomon writes, It's better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart.

Having done half a dozen funerals, I've seen that. I've seen people who are laying it to heart that this is their end, that what is next. I've heard some interesting things as people give up to give, you know, testimony.

Dad's up there on his Harley, tearing it up with all his friends in heaven. I'm like, probably not. I can't tell you how many times I sit there as people are talking, Lord, please help me. Please help me to say something, to pull this back to your word.

[28 : 10] But it's better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting. Don't let the things of this world distract you from the fact that the things of this world will end. They have an ending. And his sons, in verse 12, did unto him according as he commanded them, for his 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 the possession of a burying place of Ephraim the Hittite before Mamre.

So Abraham goes and buys this possession for a burying place. He buys the whole field because he wants this little cave to put his family in. And Joseph returned into Egypt.

So he's done this whole thing. They've had the funeral. And now he goes back to Egypt. He and his brethren and all that went up with him to bury his father after he has buried his father. I was thinking about why.

Why didn't he stay? Why didn't Joseph and all his brethren say, thank you, Pharaoh? Well, we're going to go bury my father. We're going to take everybody back. The famine's over. We'll take some food.

We're going to go back to the promised land. This is where God told us we're going to be, didn't he? Remember in Genesis 48, when it's told Joseph that his father's dying and he takes his two sons and he goes and talks with them.

[29 : 25] And Jacob says this, and Israel said unto Joseph, behold, I die, but God shall be with you and bring you again into the land of your fathers.

A promise that Joseph, God's going to bring you again to the land of your father. Well, okay, maybe this is it. Why don't we go? Because of a key phrase in there. Who shall bring you again? Who's the one who decides?

God's promise is fulfilled in God's timing. Joseph, God will bring you back, but it's for him to decide. There's a principle that we continue forward on the path God has placed us upon until he directs otherwise.

If God has placed us on that path, we don't get to jump off. We don't get to turn from that. He's placed us on. If God has given us a promise, it's for God to fulfill that promise. It wasn't for Joseph or his brothers to say, well, this is the promised land.

This is where we're supposed to end up eventually. Therefore, I'm going to go there now. But it wasn't God's timing. God's promise is always in God's timing.

[30 : 30] Remember in the book of Acts, right at the beginning is before Jesus ascends into heaven. And the disciples are really keyed up because they're like, this is the moment. This is the moment we're going to take over the world for Christ. And they said, when will you restore the kingdom?

And Jesus said, it's not for you to know the times and seasons that the father has put into his hands. What do we spend a lot of time in the church trying to figure out? I wonder what time and season we're in. What is the times and seasons, right?

Jesus said, but it's enough for you that you be endued with power from on high and the Holy Spirit will come upon you. It is enough for you to have the resources for the season you're in. Don't always be so worried about what that season is.

The season is for the Lord to know. It's his season. And he will move us from season to season as he sees fit, right? We continue forward until God redirects.

We have all the resources we need for this season, for the season we're in. I don't know what the next season will be. Two years ago, I didn't know this would be a season in my life that we'd be doing this church here.

[31 : 29] God did. I didn't have the resources then. I didn't need them then. But the season God brings us into is the time where he brings the resources. How do we know when it's time to move off that path?

Well, thankfully, we have a guide. We have the Holy Spirit who then uses God's word to show us the path. In Psalm 119, 105, it says, your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

As we're going down that path, the Lord goes this way and shines a light over there. And you're like, you know, I didn't even know that path was there. I never would have gone that way. The Lord says, let's go this way. And then we go that way. So Joseph goes back to Egypt.

He doesn't stay there. He doesn't say to his brothers, come on, let's just stay in the promised land. He realizes God has placed him in Egypt and he needs to stay there until God redirects.

When Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph now will peradventure hate us and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

[32 : 27] And so this moment in these boys' lives, 70-some-year-old men, is quite shocking. Remember, most of them have never left home. They've lived with dad this whole time. And for him to pass off the scene is quite jarring to them.

And they said, certainly, Joseph will now hate us. Remember when Joseph first revealed himself to his brothers in Genesis 45? He said, listen, guys, I know you sold me into Egypt.

You meant it for evil. Do not be grieved nor angry with yourselves that you sold me, for God did send me before you to preserve life. He said, guys, I'm not holding this against you. God had a purpose in this.

But they were still holding on to it. They were still holding this. It was not until after the death of their father that these men truly understood the heart of Joseph.

They didn't understand his heart. They didn't know who it was that they had as a brother. In Isaiah chapter six, verse one, Isaiah is lamenting the passing of King Uzziah, a king who's been king for about 40 years.

[33 : 30] His entire ministry, Isaiah's, was during the administration of this godly king. And King Uzziah dies. And Isaiah is distraught. But then he says this, he writes, in the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Sometimes the Lord removes a person from our life so that he can reveal more of himself. And for these sons of Jacob, as their father's being removed from their life, they're going to understand more of the heart of the son.

They realize that their relationship with him was based not upon their own relationship and their own understanding, but it was based upon the relationship of someone else. And so now, unfortunately, they send this messenger to Joseph saying, thy father did command before he died, saying, so shall you say unto Joseph, forgive, I pray you now, the trespass of your brethren and their sin, for they did unto you evil.

And now we pray you, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And then Joseph, when he hears this, weeps when they spake unto him.

Joseph's brothers were seeking something from Joseph. What were they seeking? Acceptance, forgiveness, favor. They were seeking what they already had. It was already theirs.

[34 : 51] We're told in Hebrews chapter six that we are to leave the principles of the doctrines of Christ, to let us go on unto perfection. We are to mature and to grow, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith towards God.

We don't have to get saved again and again and again and again. We don't get up every morning and repeat the gospel to ourselves in a sense of, I need to be saved. Now the gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

It's the power of God working in our lives that opens up our relationship with Christ and that maturity. But I don't have to get saved again and again and again. We're to move on from that and move on into a relationship of maturity.

First John 1.9 says, if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It's a done deal in the moment. It's not like, well, eventually.

It's in this moment now. I've been forgiven. So these men were seeking three things that they already had. They were seeking forgiveness for what was already forgiven, favor that they already possessed, and they were seeking a release from what only they were holding onto.

[35 : 58] Joseph's like, guys, there's nothing here. There's nothing here. Joseph's heart was breaking over the inability of these men to enter into grace.

Paul writes in Galatians 2.21, I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. We can frustrate the grace of God in our lives when we attempt to substitute a system, a system of verification for God's grace.

I want to be able to verify. I want to be able to know. God says, well, you have my word. Yeah, I know I have your word, but I have to accept that by faith. I'd like something more tangible, you know, maybe something that I could just know.

I did this, therefore this, right? I do not frustrate the grace of God. Righteousness has come through the blood of Jesus Christ, and he has released us.

And his brethren also went now. So they send the messengers, and here the boys come, thinking Joseph's gonna like whoop on them now, or that Joseph's gonna take vengeance on them. They send the messenger, and then they come.

[37 : 08] Makes me think of the prodigal son, right? How he makes up this whole thing that he's gonna say to his father. I got this whole story. Father, I've sinned against you. I'm no longer to be worthy to call your son, if I could just be one of your servants. And when the father sees him a long way off, he runs and hugs him, and all he gets out of his mouth is, Father, I'm no longer worthy to call your son.

And the father's like, Quick, my son who was dead is back. Kill the fatted calf. And he never gets to get his story out. And that's these guys. They're coming with this story. And now they fall on their face before Joseph, and they say, Behold, we be your servants.

Is it a good thing to serve? It is a great thing to serve. It is a great thing to serve God. But to serve God for the wrong reason, or from the wrong motive, is always wrong, no matter how genuine or sincere.

These men were very genuine and sincere in this moment. But they had the wrong motive, and they had the wrong reason for serving. They were serving out of fear. God will never, ever, ever have us serve from a place of fear.

We reverence God, but we do not fear. 2 Timothy 1.7, For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

[38 : 21] God has not given us a spirit of fear. He will never use a spirit of fear to motivate us. The enemy likes to make us think that. He brings in pressure, and condemnation, and fear, and guilt, and says, If you don't do this, remember?

I want verification. Then the enemy will do that. He'll tell me, If you just do this, it'll all go away. And guess what if I do that? It does. For a time. For a time. And then the guilt comes back.

And then I'm maneuvered into something else by the enemy. As I'm walking according to my flesh and my feelings, instead of walking by faith. God will never have us serve from a place of fear.

And Joseph said unto them, Fear not, for am I in the place of God? Joseph says, Only God can judge sin. I can't do that. Deuteronomy 32.27 says, The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

When Joseph says here, am I in the place of, that's literally the exact same word for, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Joseph says, Am I underneath?

[39 : 22] God? Like, wait a minute. God's the one holding all this up. I'm not the final say. God is the final say. Underneath are the everlasting arms. It's God's arms who are underneath.

Corrie Ten Boom wrote, There is no pit so deep that God's love is not deeper still. Underneath are the everlasting arms. I think of Joseph in a really deep pit, saying to his brothers, a really deep pit at one time, saying to his brothers now, Man, guys, I'm not the one holding this up.

You're looking at the wrong guy. I'm not in the place of God. God's the one who's got the plan that is deeper than anything we could imagine. But as for you, in verse 20, you thought evil against me, but God means it, or God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day to save much people alive.

Don't look at sin. Look at redemption. These men are holding on to the sin, and Joseph is saying, Guys, don't you understand that what you thought was an evil thing, and it was.

You threw me into a pit, into death, and yet God used that to save many people alive today. Romans 8, 28, all of our refrigerator verses.

[40 : 40] We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. We like that, right? We look at that, we're having a bad day. It's true. There was a time when Jesus was experiencing what Joseph just said here, what you thought evil against me, God meant for good.

In John 19, as the crowd and the Pharisees are crying out, Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him! You thought this evil against me. You thought, we'll crucify him.

We'll get rid of him. We don't want him. Well, guess what? God used that to save many people alive. God used that evil thought to bring amazing redemption. Don't focus on sin.

Focus on redemption. Our sin has been covered and removed. Now, therefore, do not fear. I will nourish you. This is the third time Joseph promises to nourish them, to contain them and care for them.

I will nourish you and your little ones. And he comforted them and spake kindly unto them. Spake kindly literally means he spoke to their hearts. How did Joseph comfort them? He comforted them by speaking again to their hearts.

[41 : 47] The same promise. He will care for them. He will care for them. He will care for them. For all the promises of God in him are yes and in him, amen, unto the glory of God by us.

How does Jesus comfort our hearts? By speaking again. That same promise we just read and many others. All things work together for good. Lord, I need to go back to that promise. Is it still true today?

Yes, it is. Thank you, Lord. And Joseph now, we've moved on from Jacob's burial. We've moved on from the aftermath of his burial with his brothers.

Now there's some period of time here of Joseph continuing to live in Egypt. And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's house, and Joseph lived 110 years. The guy was old. Jacob lived 140 years, Joseph 110.

So what was he? When Jacob died, he was 70 or so. And so he had 40 more years that he lived after his father's death.

[42 : 47] Joseph dwelt in Egypt the whole time. Like we said, he didn't go back to Canaan. He dwelt where, when, and for how long God wanted him there. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation.

So Ephraim's the second-born son, but he's now going to be listed first all the time, Ephraim and Manasseh, because he received the blessing of the elder from Jacob. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation.

Ephraim, remember, means to be fruitful or to add. And the children also of Mechir, it must have been Scottish, the son of Manasseh, were brought up upon Joseph's knees.

So Ephraim, we don't hear any of his kids' names, but here we have, for some reason, we're stuck in here, Mechir, his name. Well, Manasseh, if you remember, meant, I shall forget.

For God had caused Joseph to forget all the pain of his father's house. Do you know what Mechir means? This was one of those, sometimes you study the scripture and you see something, and you're like, I had no idea.

[43 : 45] His name means sold. Sold. Manasseh, you've made me to forget, names his son, sold. Joseph, sold into slavery, into Egypt.

God can take the worst moment of our lives and redeem them into the most beautiful. Imagine Manasseh bringing his newborn son to Joseph and Joseph going, what did you name him? Dad, I named him sold.

I named him sold. And Joseph taking that and thinking back and thinking all that God did because he was sold and going, God, I wouldn't change any of it. I wouldn't have changed any of that to hold this beautiful thing now.

Manasseh, God has made me to forget that I was sold. God can take the worst moments of our lives and redeem them into the most beautiful. Ecclesiastes 3.11, he has made everything beautiful in his time.

Look at that, two Ecclesiastes references and one message. That's pretty obscure. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die and God will surely visit you. Look at the definitive nature that he uses with this promise of God.

[44 : 52] The surety of God's promise. God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land into the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. The surety of God's promise is not dependent upon us.

It's dependent upon God. Thankfully, it's dependent upon God's character, not Israel's, not Israel's, not Israel's, the nation, or the people. He swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Every one of those. We just went through 50 chapters of it.

Everyone failed miserably. Everyone had sinned. And yet, God is faithful. God's promise is dependent upon God's character, not mine. And here we see the son before his death speaking of a future deliverance.

And in John 16, Jesus before his death in the upper room with the disciples says to them, these things have I spoken unto you that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation.

But guys, there's a future deliverance. Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel in verse 25 saying, God will surely visit you.

[45 : 57] You shall carry up my bones from hence. The son here gives definitive instructions for after his death just as he did with us. Go you into all the world and preach the gospel.

So Joseph died being 110 years old and they embalmed him and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. Did he stay in Egypt? No. As we find out in Exodus when the nation of Israel some 400 years later, they take Joseph with them to the promised land.

Joseph is still embalmed his body somewhere over in a cave and Mechpelah in the promised land in Israel with Abraham, the remains of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

They're there. Joseph is awaiting God's future promise of deliverance and resurrection. Jacob promised him, Joseph, you will be brought up hence. You will be brought to the promised land.

Joseph didn't experience the fulfillment of that promise in this life. But he did in the next one. We too are awaiting the future promise of deliverance and resurrection.

[47 : 03] Romans 8, 22 says, For we know that the whole creation groans and travails and pain together until now, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit.

Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption, I'm sorry, the adoption, that is the redemption of our body. We are awaiting that same hope, our same hope of deliverance and resurrection.

We're not going to experience it in this life. Man, but we have the promise that is to come. In 1 Corinthians, Paul writes in chapter 15 regarding the resurrection.

He's writing to the church and saying, Guys, this isn't the end. This world's not the end. This world's not our home and death isn't the end. It's only the start of something new. Behold, I show you a mystery.

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.

[48 : 04] Nobody's going to miss the resurrection in Christ. We're all going to be there at that moment. You're not going to, if you go before me or I go before you into death in this life, you're not getting your body before me.

We're all going to be there together in the resurrection. In fact, those that die in this life, they get the added benefit of receiving their bodies just before those that are still alive. God gives them a bonus.

For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. There must be an end so there can be a beginning.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.

No more sting, no more pain, no more death. It's all over. The end is just an opportunity for the beginning. As we end Genesis, it's just the opportunity for another beginning.

[49 : 04] For us, we'll be beginning a new book. Every end in Christ because he is the beginning and he's the end. I'm the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

We read that. He which testifies these things saith, surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Amen. That amen at the end of this book, you could write at the bottom of that, the beginning. It's the beginning. We're in the beginning. We may be in the end of the beginning, but this is just the beginning, guys.

Pretty soon, we're going to be with him. In Christ, the end is simply the beginning of the next chapter. And then we're going to be in that kingdom and with him for all of eternity, experiencing what?

Beginning after beginning after beginning, just having our hearts and minds experiencing the love of Christ unfolded to us. So this morning, as we close the book of Genesis, and as we close the chapter on the patriarchs, Abraham, the father of faith, and Isaac, the son of promise, Jacob, the man of the covenant, and Joseph, the son of favor, as these men step off the scene, and now we're going to go into the nation of Israel, as it broadens, as God's love broadens across a greater group of people.

[50 : 32] Sometimes it hurts to end one season and to go into a new beginning, but they're all blessed.

They're all blessed in the Lord. So whatever season you're in, don't fight it. Don't fight it. Let God's word be a lamp into your feet and a light into your path. Let him show you the way forward.

When he wants you to turn into a new season, he'll do it. I'm a fighter because God's so good. He gives promises and then I think, well, we got to get there, Lord, and I start trying to churn my way forward into that promise.

What happens if you run too far ahead? Well, now you don't have a light into your feet and a lamp into your path. And then the Lord, like the faithful shepherd, leaves the 99 and comes and gets me and brings me back.

He says, this is the path. Walk you in it. Stay in this path. Trust that God will bring it to a completion and he'll bring a new beginning.

[51 : 31] Lord, we thank you so much. You were the first and the last. You're the beginning and the end. Every beginning, you were there. And every ending, you are there. And in Christ, we have a new beginning again and again and again and again.

No, we don't need, like scripture says, to repeat salvation again and again and again. I don't need to be saved again and again and again. But I can experience the love of God and the grace of God and the faithfulness of God every day because your mercies are new every morning.

Thank you, Lord, for your love for us. Thank you that there is a beginning to this end, that there is an end, Lord, of this life, but then there is a new beginning. And Lord, I pray that whatever season we're in, Lord, if it's a season where you remove someone or something and there's pain and it hurts, that we'd remember, Lord, that you have taken the sting out because there is the hope of the resurrection.

Lord, we've brought nothing into this life and it is assured we will bring nothing out of it. Lord, your word tells us to be content. Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content.

Godliness with contentment is great gain. Lord, I think what that means is to change our focus, to focus on you. Instead of focusing on our sin, to focus on redemption.

[52 : 55] Instead of focusing on the hurt, to focus on the remedy. Instead of focusing on the loss, to focus on the resurrection. So, Jesus, we look to you this morning and we give you this week as we start a brand new week.

May it be a week filled with new beginnings, Lord, that we experience in you. We love you. In Jesus' name, amen.