

Chronology of the Bible #5

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[0 : 00] We will be caught up with the schedule that has been predetermined through the Bible chronologically. We got off schedule right from the very beginning because of the inclement weather and our missing two Sundays in a row, which is something that has never happened in the almost 50-year history that we have been here at Grace Bible Church.

So the session this morning is actually going to be part of the Through the Bible Chronologically, and we would ask you to turn, if you would please, to chapter 35 of Genesis.

And if you think biting off chapters 35 through 50 is quite a bit to take in one fell swoop, then our next session deals with the whole book of Exodus, 40 chapters.

Fortunately, chapters, I think, 25 through 40 deal with the dimensions and the instructions for the building of the tabernacle, and we are not going to measure all of those two-by-fours, verse-by-verse.

So that is fascinating content, however. But for the present, we find ourselves in Genesis chapter 35, and it has to do with a monumental event that happened in the life of this man, Jacob.

[1 : 31] It is not possible for me to over-exaggerate the importance of the patriarchs. And in the New Testament, whenever you come across the phrase, the fathers, it invariably refers to three individuals, and they are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Never lose sight of those three. If you want to call them the big three, that would not be a misnomer, because they are so strategic in the plan and program of God, that it is just impossible to exaggerate how strategic they are.

It is through the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that God has deigned to resuscitate a broken world, to reinvigorate a broken world.

And it is going to come through the instrumentality of these three individuals' descendants, principally focusing upon the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who as Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah, is going to effect the bringing in of a redeemed world.

And that will be the millennial reign of Christ, or the thousand-year reign of Christ, or the kingdom age, or whatever you choose to label it. But it will be the righting of all of the wrongs that now occur in this world, and have plagued the world from the time of Genesis 3 on.

[3 : 13] The Lord Jesus is God's appointed Redeemer. And through His finished work, and through His balancing the moral scales of the universe, He has provided a way back.

God is a gracious God, and He always leaves open the door for repentance. And repentance is God's, call it if you will, God's magic bullet.

It is incredible what can be accomplished when someone is repentant. And that brings them in line with the plan and program of God. At least for their life, anyway.

So, we have Jacob in chapter 35 at Bethel. It is a monumental event. Beginning in verse 9, God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Padanaram, and He blessed him, and God said to him, Your name is Jacob, Yaakov.

You shall no longer be called Yaakov, but Israel shall be your name. Thus He called him Israel. And God also said to him, I am God Almighty, be fruitful and multiply.

[4 : 23] A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come forth from you. And the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you.

And I will give the land to your descendants after you. Point that we made in the earlier session needs to be reiterated here, and that is, in the Old Testament, there is a great deal of emphasis placed upon materiality, physicality.

Israel is promised the land. And if you know anything about Judaism, they focus on the land, the land, the land. And, interestingly enough, that is a real bone of contention now.

There are those, and you would be surprised how many of them are seated in the United Nations who believe that Israel is not even entitled to the land.

And you know what they call these? You know what they call Israel's being there in the land? They call it the settlements. The settlements. It isn't the settlements.

[5 : 33] It's home. It's home. That's where Israel belongs. And there are those who are actually lobbying for the land of Israel to be given to the Palestinians.

And not too long ago, well, actually, it was certainly during my lifetime, only about 20 years ago or so, but when an offer was made to the Palestinians for the division of the land and that they would be given a chunk of the real estate and able to establish a capital there, and Yasser Arafat turned it down.

It was a sweetheart deal that was being offered by the Jewish people through Menachem Begin, who was the prime minister at the time.

And the Palestinians turned it down. And, of course, there has been conflict ever since. So this is a very, very strategic place and a very strategic time.

A great deal of emphasis placed upon the land and a great deal of emphasis placed upon the physical appearance of the Christophany. I believe, I don't know what else to call it.

[6 : 47] I think it was a pre-incarnate revelation of Christ. And in verse 9, we are told that God appeared to Jacob. And that apparently is a physical kind of an appearance because in verse 13 we read, Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with him.

And that just, to me, speaks very clearly of God having been physically present there in the place of Jacob and talked with him.

And we find that in Genesis 19 as well where he was the same way with Abraham as he was a Christophany there along with the two angels, the destroying angels who went on to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.

So we do not find this today. This is not God's modus operandi today. He operates through his word. And we have a completed revelation of God.

So we walk by faith, not by sight. Jacob here is walking by sight. God is talking to him face to face. It's not hard to believe that you're dealing with deity when he's standing in front of you and talking with you.

[8 : 02] That is taking it by sight. We don't do that. I have never seen the Lord Jesus and I'm confident that you haven't either.

And this is, I think, partly what was involved when Doubting Thomas confronted our Lord was the last of the apostles to see him. And Jesus said, Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed.

Blessed are they who having not seen shall believe. That's us. I've never seen him. This is why Paul says when he writes to the Romans, for we walk by faith, not by sight.

We are not to gauge our obedience to God on the basis of what we see or what is physical, but we are to gauge our obedience strictly on the basis of what God has said in his word.

Just take it at face value. God said it, we believe it, and that settles it, and we move out from that. So here we've got this monumental event and the prophecy that kings shall come forth from you in verse 11 and nations shall come to you.

[9 : 21] Some of this we've seen fulfilled and of course some of it is not fulfilled, but the time is coming when all nations of the earth, all nations of the earth are going to flow into Israel and Jerusalem.

And the prophet says and ten men will take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew. He said, we will go with you for we have heard that God is with you.

Israel will be the head and not the tail. That's when the times of the Gentiles will have come to an end and Christ will be ruling and reigning.

In chapter 36, we find the posterity of Esau and these are the Edomites in the land of Jordan. this is very significant because this land today is occupied by the descendants of Esau.

One of the prominent individuals who is known probably worldwide as a descendant of Esau was King Herod, Herod the Great. He was the one that was responsible for the murder of the innocents when Jesus was born in Bethlehem and he ordered the execution of all the male babies two years of age and under.

[10 : 36] That was King Herod and he was an Edomite. He is a direct descendant of Esau. He is not a descendant of Jacob. And it is important to understand that Jewishness requires all three of the patriarchs to have been your direct descendants.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You can be a child of Abraham and still not be a Jew. That's what Ishmael was. He was a child of Abraham but he was not a Jew.

You can be a child of Isaac and not be a Jew. That's what Esau was. He was born of Isaac but he was not a Jew. And you can be a child of Jacob and not be a Jew.

Or can you? Think about that. If you're a child of Jacob if you're a child of Jacob if you are a child of Jacob you have to be a child of Isaac and of Abraham.

There you are. There's the three. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And when Jacob's name is changed to Israel both of those names are used to designate him throughout Scripture.

[12 : 00] Sometimes they're used interchangeably. I remember hearing an interesting interview one time this was a number of years ago when David Ben-Gurion who was the first prime minister of Israel right after it was birthed as a nation in 1948 and President Truman was the first one to acknowledge the legitimacy of the state of Israel.

Israel. And I remember hearing David Ben-Gurion say that we held a conference and we debated when we declare our independence what are we going to name this new nation?

And he said we kicked around all kinds of names and came up with all kinds of possibilities and what we settled on was Israel. Well, of course you did.

Absolutely. Israel is what it has to be and Israel is what it is to this day. So, Esau and his posterity are all enumerated here in chapter 36 his descendants and so on and they are going to occupy that land as we say and their descendants are still there to this day this is in the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan and in southern Jordan is where Petra is and we believe that's where the Jewish people who will constitute a remnant in the last day are going to be holed up trying to survive for their life and God is supernaturally going to provide for them in the same way that he did the children of Israel came out of Egypt in providing them with sustenance and protection and everything they need so that the Antichrist is unable to get at them.

fascinating content in chapter 37 Joseph who is the 11th born has been already elevated to the position of the firstborn now we cannot identify with this because we have an entirely different culture but in this culture the firstborn was generally considered everything and it was the firstborn son who would receive a double portion of the family's inheritance when the father died and the family was all divided up the firstborn son would get a double portion and he would become the new patriarch of the family with different responsibilities and different expenses and so on caring for the needs of the whole clan so he would be given a double portion ordinarily that would have gone to Reuben who was the firstborn but Reuben is bypassed and he is not going to be a recipient of that and lo and behold one who comes along much later by the name of

[15 : 01] Joseph is going to actually be designated as the firstborn and where is he by way of rank he's number 11 wow you mean to tell me that God bypassed 10 of his sons to settle in number 11 why him because number 11 Joseph Joseph is going to be the firstborn son of the one woman that he really loved and that was Rachel Rachel had been childless all this time and when she finally had her first baby there were 10 sons that preceded that were born from Leah Leah had 6 of them herself and Bilhah is going to have 2 and Zilpah is going to have 2 and the last one of all is going to be the baby of the clan and that will be

Benjamin so Jacob had a real thing for Joseph and you know what he did he moved him clear up to the front of the line gave him a position of prominence ahead of all of his other brothers now how do you think that made all those other brothers feel well of course dad's got his favorite but you got to remember he was the child of the woman that he loved he was the child of the woman that he thought he was getting the night that Laban pulled the old switcheroo and slipped in what's her name say it a little clearer Leah thank you Leah the one with the weak eyes and I never have figured out what that meant I don't know if that meant she needed glasses or what I don't think they had glasses in those days but Rachel Rachel Rachel obviously had a countenance that was kind of stunning you know and Leah lacked that and he fell for he saw Rachel and that was his pick and he thought he was marrying her but he had to serve another seven years for her and then this son that is going to be born number 11 is elevated pushed all the way up to the front and he's given the coat the coat of airship the coat of dignity it is the coat that the one wearing it might as well have a sign plastered across his front

I am the next in command and every time his brothers looked at him wearing that coat they disgust disgust and anger and jealous and Joseph had a way of kind of rubbing it in I don't know if he did that intentionally but we are told that he was 17 years old here in chapter 37 and in verse 3 that Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons because he was the son of his old age and he made him a very coated tunic and his brothers saw that the father loved him more than all his brothers and they hated him could not speak to him on friendly terms now we can go into all kinds of ramifications as to whether Jacob was out of line and showing this kind of favoritism that he booked all this jealousy with the brothers and I'm sure there were some very unwise things that he did and some very unwise ways that he treated the others but nonetheless the way this fell out was there was jealousy and animosity and Joseph says he had a dream and when he told his brothers this dream boy it really got to them and he said listen to this dream which

I've had for behold we were binding sheaves in the field around the field working just as usual you know binding sheaves in the field and lo my sheaf rose up and also stood erect and behold your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf isn't that interesting and I can see these brothers a couple of them are rolling their eyes you know a couple of them are looking at each other and saying get this guy can you believe this his brother said to him are you actually going to reign over us or are you really going to rule over us they never contemplated anything so ridiculous in their whole life they just can't stand this kid and he is just a kid just a teenager 17 years old in verse 2 and these are of course probably in their 20s some of might have even been in their 30s so they are not only holding his position and his favoritism against him but they're holding his age against him he's just a pipsqueak what's he who does he think he is anyway and then he had another dream and related it to his brothers lo

I have had still another dream and behold the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me Joseph you would probably have been better served to have kept your dreams to yourself and he can't resist telling them and his father he related it to his father he had all these moon and the stars on the moon and the sun and eleven stars bowing down to me and this is too much even for his father even for the father that doted on this son he said son you're stepping over the bounds now just don't don't what is this dream that you've had shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground and his brothers were jealous well I guess and his father look at this his brothers were jealous but his father kept the saying in mind that means he doesn't know what to do with it but he's not going to dismiss it or forget it he's thinking what could this what could this possibly be and he just kind of lodges it there in his gray matter and his brothers want to pasture their father's flock in

[22 : 21] Shechem and Israel said to Joseph that is Jacob said to Joseph are not your brothers pasturing the flock in Shechem come I will send you to them and he said to him I will go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock bring back a report to me so he sent him from the valley of Hebron and he came to Shechem and a man found him and behold he was wandering in the field the man said what are you looking for out here well I'm looking for my brothers you know where they are he said well they moved from here they were here earlier but I overheard some of them say let's go to Dothan probably greener grass there for the flock so they moved all the flock and they took off the Dothan and when the brothers saw him in verse 18 they hatched this plot they're going to kill him simple as that now this this is the kind of thing that elevated hatred is capable of the jealousy the anger the hatred has risen to the level where they're actually willing to do him in despite the fact that they're not full brothers they are at least half brothers and the only one that would probably stand up for him is another who would be a full brother but he's not on the scene yet and that's

Benjamin and when Benjamin is born his mother is going to die giving birth to him so Rachel will be off the scene and now Joseph is here this 17 year old out and they decided that we have had enough of him and we and we are going to do him in that's that's the kind of thing that hatred is capable of doing so the text says kill him throw him into one of the pits and we'll just tell dad wild beast devoured him and nobody will be the wiser and Reuben heard this and rescued him out of their hands and said no no let's not take his life you see Reuben is the number one son he's the first born and that makes him more responsible for the others at least in that culture it did the fact that Joseph had been elevated to that position doesn't relieve

Reuben of his responsibility he's the first born and Reuben is thinking I can't allow this to go on he's the only one that's thinking sanely about it and he says let's just not shed his blood let's just throw him into the pit that is in the wilderness but do not lay hands on him and he intended Reuben intended after they left Joseph in the pit and they go on grazing someplace else then Reuben is going to sneak back and rescue him get him out of the pit that was his plan but it didn't turn out that way there is a caravan of Ishmaelites coming and they are Ishmaelites and Midianites mixed and they are going to buy him the brothers decide hey there's no money in killing him we can sell him sell him and get the price of a slave and we'll split the money and we'll take this garment that he's wearing and saturate it with animal blood and we'll take it back and say dad got bad news for you but we found the remains of

Joseph and this is all that's left this is garment obviously wild beast killed him dragged the body off with him and this garment is left behind and nothing that we could do we weren't there we didn't know anything about it it's impossible to tell one lie you've got to tell a lie and you've got to follow it up with all kinds of backup lies so they had it all hatched and they were going to do this and this is exactly what they told their father and wild animals got him I'm sorry and of course Jacob is greatly bereaved and wild beast is devoured him Jacob verse 34 tore his clothes put sackcloth on his loins mourned for his son many days he refused to be comforted and he said surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son so his father wept for him the

Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar Pharaoh's officer the captain of the guard so you know very much as well as I do from having read the text as to what happens Joseph is confronted with Potiphar's wife I don't know exactly what his appearance was like but he must have been a handsome good looking young man and we don't know what Pharaoh's wife's problem was but she obviously was not satisfied with whatever her husband the Pharaoh was providing for her and she thought that Joseph might add a little excitement to her life and provide something that maybe was lacking so she began flirting with him and it wasn't long until she propositioned him and Joseph was a man of integrity and he would not be compromised sexually or any other way and he refused her advances and there's a saying I think didn't exist at the time

[28 : 20] I think it came along with Shakespeare quite a bit later but hell hath no fury like a woman scorned and Joseph scorned her Joseph would not come and lie with her Joseph did not find her irresistible and no doubt that was really offensive to her feminine ego that she could not entice this young man into her bed so she made up this story about him trying to have his way with her and she fought him off and all she had to show for her efforts was this piece of his garment that she tore off of him as he was trying to molest her and she turned him in and reported him and of course he gets thrown in the slammer and he's there in the prison with other people who had offended the pharaoh in one way or another and you are aware of the dreams and what took place and the dreams that pharaoh had and could not interpret them and this man Joseph is reputed to be one who can interpret dreams apparently the word got around that he had interpreted dreams that the baker and the butler had had when they were there in prison with him and pharaoh had a dream and it had to do with chapter 41 of

Genesis about these cows that were sleek and fat and in his dream there were seven other cows that were gone and obviously starving and he had no idea what in the world this meant and we are told that in verse 8 his spirit was troubled he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt all its wise men and no one could interpret them and the cupbearer who had been in prison with Joseph earlier said I would make mention today of my own offenses pharaoh I remember your majesty when you were furious with his servants and you put me in confines and I was there with the baker and so on we had this dream and you know this man Joseph I told him what I dreamed and he told me what it meant and you know that is exactly what came to pass I mean it was just absolutely amazing and oh pharaoh was stroking his beard and said what did you say oh yeah

I remember Joseph he was yeah well sin for him so Joseph came in pharaoh told him what was going on and he said the dream the fat cows that you saw represent bumper crops for Egypt every year going to be lots and lots of good crops for seven years then it's going to be followed by a tremendous drought the heavens are going to be turned off and there will be no rain and everything is going to dry up and that's going to last for seven years and what you need to do is take the plenty of those seven years and store up in vast warehouses so that when the lean years come you'll be able to feed your people and pharaoh thought this was sheer genius but of course we know who the real genius behind Joseph actually was who was informing him of what was coming and that of course was nothing other than the

Lord himself so that all worked out eventually this famine is all over the whole region and when the time comes that there's no crops growing in Egypt guess what there aren't any crops growing in Israel either because Israel is not very far from Egypt it's right next door so they were all suffering the effects of this drought that went on year after year and some of us right here in the U.S.

of A. know what it means when the clouds just won't give their rain and it goes on for two or three years and you have real bad crops or real lean harvest and the crops maybe 20% of what they ordinarily would it's disastrous well each year this went on it got worse and worse but there was grain in Egypt because Egypt was the only one that took advantage of storing up all of this surplus in advance and they had a huge amount of grain in storage and this is what precipitated Jacob telling his sons well I've heard that there is grain in Egypt you go down to Egypt and you recall the story about them going down there and getting grain and finding this pharaoh's top assistant in charge and he interviewed them and they didn't have a clue didn't have a clue that this was Joseph after all this was many years later probably probably somewhere in the area of 12 to 14 years after he was sold into slavery in Egypt so he has probably filled out he's bigger he's probably probably got a beard and he is speaking fluent

[33 : 39] Egyptian and when he saw his brothers come in he recognized them right away but they didn't have a clue that this was Joseph and Joseph spoke to them through an interpreter because his brothers could only speak Hebrew Joseph could speak fluent Hebrew as well but he didn't speak in Hebrew he spoke through an interpreter using Egyptian and he talked with them and they gave him the story about their father and about the grain and everything and you know the story how this went back and forth and then finally when they came down this next time the last time they came down after grain again Joseph revealed himself to them and boy you could have knocked them over with a feather they had no idea that they were talking to their baby brother the one that they hated with all of this passion for years and now he is here and he is the number two man in

Egypt second in command only to Pharaoh himself wow so when they go back home how are they going to tell dad you see see how lies come back to haunt you years later down the road someone has said you know if you just tell the truth you can forget you don't even have to remember it you just tell the truth but somebody else has said no one has a good enough memory to be a perfect liar because you forget what you lied about and the things come back to haunt you you know so what we've got here is an intrigued situation this is this is this is an Old Testament soap opera that is developed you know the thing that amazes me I was telling a brief when we were reading these passages one of the things that amazes me is how in the world why hasn't

Hollywood picked up on this is this an incredible story or what I mean I could even I could even write the script and choose the cast this would be a you know right up there with ten commandments and all the rest this would make an amazing story and it is so flooded with wonderful morals great moral principles about truthfulness and integrity and everything could be built into it I know that Hollywood would probably focus on the fiasco between Joseph and Pharaoh's wife you know they'd probably make that half of the movie but nonetheless this would make a tremendous story really would I mean it'd done some things with David and Goliath and they'd done Samson and of course Charlotte and Heston and ten commandments and all I don't know how they've overlooked this it's just amazing it'd make a wonderful wonderful story so when all is told

Jacob gets the truth and the sons have to fess up that it's Joseph Joseph but I thought but Joseph Joseph and this old man's heart had to be gladdened like it hadn't been gladdened for years and not only that dad but he wants us all to come down to Egypt and he's already cleared it with the Pharaoh and they will welcome us and give us a choice piece of land and we can take the whole family the whole clan and you know how many there were 70 70 of them and we take take everybody just pack up everything and they'll all go down to the land of Egypt and there they'll dwell in some of the most choice acreage that is available it's already been set aside the Pharaoh is already okayed it's going to be wonderful so they pack up everything and they all move down to

Egypt and Jacob is just absolutely beside himself and when he sees his son his long lost son Joseph it's a reunion that is just beyond all reunions father and son meeting after thinking him dead all these years and here he is not only alive but he's the salvation of the whole family the salvation of the whole nation of Egypt this is just too much it is just overwhelming wow what an experience just can't imagine what this must have been like when they met and I've got ahead of myself here but this spying thing comes out in verse 8 of chapter 42 Joseph had recognized his brothers they did not recognize him and he told them they were spies you know he salted this whole thing with the money in their bags and all the rest of it and he did it in such a way that would guarantee their return that they would have to come back because he's he's planning this whole thing out and it is just absolutely amazing you know

[39 : 19] Joseph Joseph and Daniel although they're far apart chronologically Joseph and Daniel are two of the most important biblical characters about whom nothing negative is ever said this does not mean they were somehow perfect individuals and beyond any kind of criticism but they lived lives of integrity and consistency and honesty and nothing negative is ever said about Joseph or Daniel they were two really sterling young men when Joseph sees Benjamin in chapter 43 he he's just you know kind of overcome with emotion and he makes his feast and they prepare the feast and everything just an amazing story that is developing here takes place over a period of chapters and chapter 45 opens with

Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood before him and he cried have everyone go out from me so there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brother and the every man here he's talking about his aides his Egyptian assistants and everyone that is in some official capacity there and he dismisses all of them he says I'd like all of you fellows to go out you Israelites you remain here everybody else please leave the room and they all leave and now here is Joseph standing there with his eleven brothers and they still don't have a clue as to who this man really is and he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it and the household of Pharaoh heard it and Joseph said to his brothers

I am Joseph I am Joseph they look at each other and say what is he saying and you can be sure he's saying it in Hebrew I am Joseph and they they are stunned they look at each other and they did you hear what I heard did he say Joseph Joseph oh no oh no because you know what they're thinking that Joseph would be thinking like they would be thinking which was yes I am Joseph and tomorrow morning you're all going to be executed that was the last thing

Joseph would have ever thought of I am Joseph is my father still alive but his brothers could not answer him that's another way of saying they're speechless they're stunned they just stand there and they look at each other and they look at Joseph and nobody knows what to say and everybody is afraid to say anything and he said to his brothers please come closer to me and they come closer and I'm sure they were doing it in baby steps coming closer very slowly and very carefully coming closer and he said I am your brother Joseph whom you sold into

Egypt I can read the mind of every one of them and each one is saying I cannot believe this is happening now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here for God sent me before you to preserve life for you I can just see question marks dancing all around their minds what how when why who all of this just abject confusion just this whole cloud of confusion settles in over all of them as they're trying to process what he is saying God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth and to keep you alive by a great deliverance now therefore it was not you who sent me here but God and he has made me a father to Pharaoh that just means he's made me an authority to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt hurry go up to my father and say to him thus says your son

[45 : 05] Joseph God has made me lord of all Egypt come down to me do not delay shall live in the land of Goshen and you shall be near me you and your children and your children's children and your flocks and your herbs and all that you have and I'll provide for you here there's still five years of famine to come lest you and your household and all that you have be impoverished and behold your eyes see and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see and it is my mouth which is speaking to you now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt and all that you have seen and you must hurry and bring my father down here then he fell on his brother Benjamin now Benjamin is his only full brother all the others are half brothers all from the same father but all from a different mother Benjamin and Joseph are the only two full brothers so they have a rapport that the others did not have he fell on his brother

Benjamin's neck and wept and Benjamin wept on his neck and he kissed all his brothers and wept on them and afterward his brothers talked with him and the news of this all got out of course and it just just amazing and they all come down and I'd like to say that they live happily ever after well they live happily ever after until what we'll see coming up in Exodus until Pharaoh rose up that knew not Joseph and that puts Caiatus on that because they're going to begin the persecution so Israel's last days are found in chapter 48 and he is on his last legs and he knows it he is going to be passing on and he makes them promise that when he does die that they will not leave him here in Egypt but that they will take his bones back to the land of Israel and see to it that he is buried there and the time is coming when he's going to gather all of them around his deathbed and we talked a little bit about that in the earlier session

I do want to spend just a moment on this chapter 48 about Manasseh and Ephraim because these are Joseph's boys and they come in for Jacob's blessing and in verse 8 of chapter 48 he asks Joseph who are these and Joseph says these are my boys whom God has given me here in Egypt and Jacob says bring them to me please that I may bless them the eyes of Israel were so dim from age that he could not see and Joseph brought them close to him and he kissed them and embraced them these are his grandsons and Israel said to Joseph I never expected to see your face and behold God has let me see your children as well this is wonderful Joseph took them from his knees and bowed with his face to the ground Joseph took them both Ephraim with his right hand toward

Israel's left and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right and brought them close and Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim who was the younger and his left hand on Manasseh's head crossing his hands he did it this way putting his hands on the boys but the right hand is the hand of blessing that again is a cultural thing that we don't understand and it's not part of our culture but it was very much a part of theirs God even refers to his right hand because the right hand is the hand usually of strength now for you south pauls it would be the left hand but you have to understand you are in a minority because most of us are right handed and he put his right hand on the younger son and his left hand on the older one and

Joseph says to his father dad you've got your hands crossed you need to put your right hand on Manasseh and he said no it is Ephraim but Ephraim is the younger it's the older who's supposed to get the blessing oh remember Jacob and Esau remember that here we've got the same kind of thing again this is actually God's providence that is overruling the prevailing culture and it is Ephraim who is going to receive that blessing and he did he blessed Joseph and he said to God in verses 15 and 16 I will not take time to read it all but then when Joseph verse 17 saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim and said it displeased him and he grasped his father's hand to remove it well dad is old and he can't see very well and he doesn't know what he's doing so

[50 : 29] I'm going to fix this and put dad's hand where it belongs but no it was where it belonged and he said father refused and said I know my son he also shall become a people and he also shall be great however his younger brother shall be greater than he and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations this is in a sense nothing but a replay that Jacob himself had undergone from his father Isaac and all this is saying is that God makes his own choices for supremacy that do not often comply with the choices that a culture makes and that it is God's choice that is the only one that really matters and here we find this actually it's a prophecy it's a prophecy as much as it is anything and he says his younger brothers shall be greater than he and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations and he blessed them that day saying by you

Israel shall pronounce blessings saying may God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh and Israel and Israel and Israel will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers and I give you one portion more than your brothers which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow and then in this tender scene that closes out the book of Genesis beginning with chapter 49 he gathers all of his sons around him from the youngest to the oldest and they are in a circle around him and Jacob is on his deathbed and he is about to succumb and he knows it and the blessings that he is going to pronounce upon these sons are not only blessings they are prophecy as well and

Jacob is being inspired of God to actually indicate what the future of these sons and their descendants is going to be and it is verse 8 that focuses upon what will be the royal line and when he comes to Judah remember Judah is the fourth born he is the fourth born the first was Reuben and then Simeon and then Levi and then Judah and Judah your brothers shall praise you your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies your father's son shall bow down to you Judah is a lion's whelp from the prey my son you have gone up he couches he lies down as a lion and as a lion who dares came up and then this verse is so significant the scepter that's the royal rod of reigning and if you've ever seen a picture of English royalty sitting there in all their regalia with the crowns and the robe and the throne and everything you will see the king or the queen sitting there with a scepter in their hand and it's about 1618 and 1618 inches long it is just a diamond gold encrusted studded rod that is a fancy very valuable symbol of royalty and that the one who wields the scepter is the one who is in charge and when he says the scepter shall not depart from Judah ako get and if that the k■ you and in Luke, you will see that Judah plays a very prominent role. It is Judah that will be the royal line and through the line of Judah, Jesus, the Messiah, will be born. And

Jesus' earthly mother, Mary, is also going to be a direct descendant from the line of Judah. But she is coming out of Solomon through Nathan, where Joseph, the official father of Jesus, not the biological father, but the adopted father of Jesus, comes out of the line of David through Solomon. And both Mary and Joseph have a direct ancestry that goes all the way back to Judah. And it's just an absolutely beautiful thing. And it is tragic how many people read the genealogies and they just skip over them because it don't mean anything to them. A bunch of names you can't pronounce anyway. They don't mean anything. Why did they put all these names in there? Hey, if you knew anything about Judaism, if you knew anything about the royal throne rights, those names are essential. And those ancestors from whom they came are very, very important. That is the bloodline. And it is a beautiful thing. So the thing that we need to notice here in closing this out in connection with the blessings that aged Joseph or Jacob is giving to his brothers, or I'm sorry, giving to his sons and their brothers, is that this is not only a blessing, but it is a prophecy. It is a prediction of what is going to transpire through these sons and through their descendants. And indeed, as you follow history, you'll see that it is very, very much on track.

So we come now to chapter 50 and the death of Israel. Joseph fell on his father's face, wept over him, kissed him. Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father.

[57 : 06] So the physicians embalmed Israel. Forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him. Seventy days.

The days of mourning were past. Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, If I've now found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, Behold, I am about to die.

In my grave, which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me. Now, therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will return. And Pharaoh gave Joseph permission to go with a funeral revenue to the land of Egypt, or the land of Israel out of Egypt, and they are going to go up a very great company.

This is going to be a funeral procession in verse 9 that will be a very lengthy one. And there they came to the land where he's going to be buried.

And it is in the cave of Machpelah. And if you go back earlier in Genesis, you will see that this is the real estate that Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite when it came time to bury his wife, Sarah.

[58 : 23] And he bought it from the sons of Heth, and they paid a goodly amount of silver for it. And the cave of Machpelah has been transformed into a rather large building.

And tourists today who are able to go to the land of Israel now, I understand, have access to the tombs of Abraham and Sarah and Leah and Rachel.

Yes, Rachel's buried there. Rebecca isn't buried there. But Isaac. And they are all buried there in the cave, in the tomb of Machpelah. And if you want, you can have a fascinating tour.

When you get to your computer, just type in Hebron, H-E-B-R-O-N, Hebron, Israel, and the cave of Machpelah, or the funeral place of Machpelah.

That's M-A-C-H-P-E-L-A-H, Machpelah, and it's found in Genesis. And you can see the actual place. And it is revered because it is the home of Abraham.

[59 : 33] It's the burial place of Abraham, who is not only the father of the Jewish nation, but he's also the father of the Arab population through Ishmael as well.

So it's a fascinating place. And it was off limits when we were there because there were too many areas of conflict going on. But things have improved since that time.

So visitors and tourists are actually able to go there now and see that. Well, this has been just a haphazard hit and miss kind of proposition.

I trust that you got something out of the highlights of it. But I must admit my ongoing frustration. I told the folks at the 9 o'clock hour that some years ago we went through just the book of Genesis.

And it was five years. So you can imagine the frustration that we are feeling trying to go through the book of Genesis like we are here.

[60 : 44] And yet, you know, there is value and benefit to be derived from the word of God, no matter how you approach it, no matter what you're doing, by what kind of study or what kind of method.

This book, this book just keeps yielding benefits and blessing and understanding. And it just won't quit.

And it doesn't make any difference how you approach it or the methodology you use. It is just absolutely astounding. Astounding. Is there a quick comment or question?

I've already blown the time on the thing anyway. So what's the difference? Anybody have a comment or question? Okay. Joe Moore up here.

Wait for the mic. All this does is show how God uses man's sin, treachery, whatever he does for his plan, for his good.

[61 : 49] Yep. Amen to that. You know, it's amazing. It's and this is borne out in in Christianity Clarified volumes.

I think it's I think it's 25, 26, 27, something like that. Anyway, the point is made. It deals with the issue of pain and suffering, difficulty, disappointment and everything that goes with it.

Stuff that comes into all of our lives. And the observation is made that God is committed to using even the sin of a believer to work his eventual will.

And that is a wonderful thing. That is a wonderful thing. And no, it doesn't encourage or entice or justify our sin. And God doesn't encourage our sin at all.

But if God is able to use only the things you do right, he's going to be in big trouble. But God is committed to using everything.

[62 : 51] All things. God works all things together for a good, even the stupid things you do. Even the sinful things you do. Now, I'll tell you, one of the ways he may use the sinful things you do is he uses them by way of the woodshed.

God has a woodshed. And those whom the Lord loves, he chastens. He spans them. Just like you do a wavered child when they get out of line and you do it for their benefit.

Not so much for their punishment as for their training, their chastisement. And God is committed to doing that.

So, it's a beautiful thing. What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? Now, if you be a son and you're not chastened, then are you bastards and not sons?

God doesn't chasten the devil's kids. He chastens his own. He spans them. And sometimes, sometimes, if we will not respond to the spanking, he may just say, Okay, that's enough.

[63 : 59] Come on home. Come on. Come on. Get out of here. That's called the death, the sin and the death. And sometimes God does that. And even that is an act of his love.

I'll tell you what. If you were in Christ, there is just no way. You are in a win-win situation. And that provides a peace, a comfort, a joy that the world doesn't know anything about.

And only those who are in Christ have that. My, my. Is there somebody else that had a comment or question? Yes. Nathan? Concerning the swap, the switching of sons with Ephraim and Manasseh and Jacob and Esau.

I heard a message once that was very compelling to me, but saying that, you know, why is that? It's such a strange thing to happen and why is that in the Bible? But that it was a foreshadowing of another swap that was going to happen in the future.

And Paul says in the New Testament scriptures, he kind of equates two brothers, Jesus and Adam, as if they're brothers. And how Jesus, who was kind of like the second son.

[65 : 08] He's referred to as the last Adam. As the last Adam, right. So he became the preeminent one over the firstborn Adam. Amen.

Absolutely. That was a neat thing. And you know, what we've touched on, what I've given you this morning, you know what it is? Just little tidbits. That's all it is. Just little tidbits. But it just goes to show you that in this marvelous book, everything in it is there for a purpose.

I don't care how insignificant it seems. It is there for a reason. And everything in it is connected to everything in it. And it's just, it's a beautiful thing.

It's a beautiful thing what God has put together. We'll take time for one more. If there is one, otherwise I'm going to cut you loose. Anybody? Okay. Up front here. My sweet wife, Marie, has a question or an observation.

What happened? I don't embarrass you. But talking about the scepter reminded me of Esther when she went into the inner court.

[66 : 21] And the king, with the power and the authority, whether she would be listened to was if he held it out. And it mentions here it was a golden scepter.

You know, talk about being elaborate or something. But it just reminded me of the scepter. And that too, even though it wasn't Jewish per se, it was in the land of pagans really, there is a whole lot of mid-eastern culture that splashes over into other areas immediately around it.

Throughout the whole Mediterranean basin. And the scepter that was extended to Esther there is quite telling. It's a beautiful thing. It ties in with what we're talking about.

Because the king, in this case, I think it was Ahasuerus. He sat there holding this scepter, sat on the throne. And if you come in to the king's presence. And again, be reminded, this is so completely foreign to us.

But then, if you came in to the king's presence unannounced. In other words, he did not send for you.

[67 : 33] You just show up in front of the king. Well, who do you think you are? You don't come into the presence of royalty like that.

Without having been requested to be there. But Esther did. And everybody knew that when you come into the king's presence unannounced.

If he does not extend to you the scepter. In other words, he just takes this rod. This golden rod that is usually encrusted with diamonds and rubies and all kinds of beautiful things.

And he extends it to you. Points to you with the scepter. And if you come into the king's presence. Then you can approach him and state your case. But if he doesn't.

If he just sits there. Aides will appear. And they will escort you immediately from his presence. And who knows what's going to happen to you then.

[68 : 35] And everything was hinging upon Esther going in to the king. Unannounced and unrequested.

And when he saw her. He extended to her the scepter. And she was able to speak. Tell him why she was there. And you know the rest of it is a beautiful story.

So thank you for that addition. That's another use of the scepter. All right. Let's close in prayer. Father we recognize that there is so very much that we've missed.

And that this book is worthy of so much more than we've given it. And yet we are grateful for what we've been able to glean. We know that there is so much more.

Thank you for having provided this amazing book. That the world stands in awe of in some regards. And yet completely dismisses and disregards in others.

[69 : 30] Our hearts are saddened for them. Because we know the joy that they could have. If only they would open their hearts and minds to this word. Thank you for each one here this morning.

In Christ's name. Amen.