

## BY FAITH JOSEPH

Sunday Morning: March 3, 2002

**Text: Hebrews 11:22** "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and **gave commandment concerning his bones.**"

We continue our studies in the book of Hebrews. Last Sunday we looked at Isaac and Jacob and their sons. To day we are going to look at Joseph's bones in Hebrews 11:22.

Joseph confirmed the prophecy of Abraham concerning his seed, that they would come into the land promised to Abraham 430 years later. Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones that they were to take with them into the land promised to Abraham.

### JOSEPH'S PROPHECY

**Genesis 50:24-26** "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and **God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.** 25. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall **carry up my bones** from hence. 26. So Joseph died, *being* an hundred and ten years old: and they **embalmed** him, and **he was put in a coffin** in Egypt."

It was very unusual that Joseph was not buried. His coffin sat around in some one's house until the children of Israel left Egypt.

### BURY MY DEAD

**Genesis 23:4** "I (Abraham) *am* a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I **may bury my dead out of my sight.**"

I put this verse in our lesson so that we can see what it means to be buried. Burying some one is not just putting them into a coffin. Joseph was not out of sight, he was in plain view and was constant reminder of *take me with you when you leave*. You are not going to be here for ever. That is what Joseph's coffin meant. It was a memorial and a reminder that there were better things ahead.

### JACOB AND HIS SONS

**Acts 7:15-16** "So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, **he, and our fathers,** 16. And were **carried over into Sychem,** and **laid** in the **sepulchre** that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor . . ."

This passage of scripture gives us some insight into what happen to Joseph's brother when they died. All of Joseph's brothers as well as his father was carried into the land of Canaan and buried in the cave of Machpelah, but Joseph wasn't. It is also interesting to note that Joseph's father and all of his brothers were buried in the same cave as Abraham and Isaac, but Joseph was buried in the land of Shechem.

Again, Joseph's grave was separate from the graves of his father and brothers. I am not sure what that means. Maybe the Lord will open that up to us some time in the future.

### OATH FULFILLED

**Exodus 13:19** "And Moses took the **bones of Joseph with him:** for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, **God will surely visit you;** and ye shall carry up my **bones** away hence with you."

We see that Moses was mindful of Joseph's bones and the promise to take his bones with them when they left Egypt, so *Moses took the bones of Joseph with him.*

## **BONES BURIED – 144 YEARS**

**Joshua 24:32** "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph."

Shechem is in the land of Samaria. This was the land where Jacob and his sons began to sin because of what they did to all the men of that city. Levi and Simeon made a deal with the men of Shechem and when they could not defend themselves Levi and Simeon killed them all.

I was doing some research on the time line of all that happened to Joseph and when he left Egypt. I was amazed to find that from the time that Joseph died until Moses was born is only 64 years. I want to give credit to E. W. Bullinger and his Companion Bible. I guess I have always thought that the 430 years began in Genesis 15:13 when the Lord told Abraham that his seed would be afflicted 430 years and then come out with great substance. Mr. Bullinger says that the time line started when Abraham was called to go into the land of Canaan while he still lived in Mesopotamia. I am not at this time prepared to challenge him on his dates, but he has apparently thought this thing through. The 430 years ended when Moses left the land of Egypt.

Another thought about Joseph's bones is that someone was responsible for carrying Joseph's bones for the 40 years in the wilderness then during the conquest of the land of Canaan. From the day that Joseph died until he was buried Mr. Bullinger calculated it to be 144 years.

Seeing Joseph's coffin stimulated thoughts of better things to come. A time of leaving those that would oppress them for 430 years. Thoughts of inheriting a land flowing with milk and honey. The coffin and bones of Joseph were a memorial of better things and days ahead.

## **BOW OF REMEMBRANCE**

**Genesis 9:16** "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth."

The rainbow is a memorial or symbol to remind us who dwell on the earth that God would not destroy the earth with a flood again. This was a covenant that God made with every living creature of the earth.

## **PASSOVER MEMORIAL**

**Exodus 12:14** "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever."

The passover is a memorial. Notice that the passover is a feast, a time of eating. I was just thinking of how we could remember special occasions without all the cost that goes into a big celebration with food and all. It costs money to fix a meal. I was thinking about Christmas with the expense of all the presents. The celebration of the Lord's birth with friends and loved ones can get expensive.

The nation of Israel celebrates Purim by the exchanging of gifts. This celebration is done to remember their deliverance from their enemies when Ahasuerus was king of Persia and Ester was his queen.

I thought that if we remembered these events with a note on a calendar we could save a lot of money and time. What kind of memorial would that be? Celebrating in that manner would not give a lasting remembrance to those significant events. Remembering a special event with food and gifts extends the thoughts of the special event beyond just a thought.

The passover was a special feast of a special lamb and it also required the removing of leaven from one home which meant a thorough house cleaning. The feast of unleavened bread lasted seven days. Not just one party, but a seven days of remembering. That is the kind of memorial that will continue with you for some time, hopefully for one year.

### PHYLACTERY

**Exodus 13:9** "And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a **memorial between thine eyes**, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt."

When I think about this verse I think of the Phylactery. I am so thankful that we don't have to wear a box on our head and arm. The Phylactery is a box with scripture in it. or have a box of scripture on your hand or left arm. I would rather have the Word of God in my head rather than on my forehead. I can do more with memorized scripture than with scripture I have not memorized. The Phylactery did serve a very important purpose in that it did show others that you do value the Law and the fact the Lord delivered them out of Egypt.

### MEMORIAL BOOK

**Exodus 17:14** "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this (victory over Amalek) *for a memorial in a book*, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

Writing this victory in a book was what the Lord wanted Moses to do, but the Lord wanted what was written in the book rehearsed in the ears of Joshua. The Lord did not want Joshua to forget who gave him the victory over his enemy. This battle was to be rehearsed because this was dress rehearsal for what Joshua would do in the land of Canaan.

### STONES OF MEMORIAL

**Exodus 28:12** "And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod *for stones of memorial* unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a **memorial**."

Here we have the ephod of stones put on the shoulders of Aaron so that there would a memorial before God of the tribes of the children of Israel. In each stone was inscribed with the name of each tribe. These stones were in plain view when Aaron ministered in the Tabernacle. Aaron could not see the names on those stones, but God could and did want to remember each tribe.

### BREASTPLATE

**Exodus 28:29** "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy *place*, for a **memorial** before the LORD continually."

The breast plate also had stones with the names of the tribes of Israel on it. We see that over and over again there were memorials to continually remind the Lord and his people of things that were not to forget.

### FRINGES

**Numbers 15:38-39** "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a rib band of blue: 39. And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and **remember** all the **commandments** of the LORD, and **do them**; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:"

The Lord instructed that the children of Israel were to put blue fringes upon their garments. This was not just for the priesthood but all of the people. Fringes were several threads that were looped and tied on the garment as a tassel. These fringes were to remind the people that God had given commandments and they needed to remember them. By having these fringes on your garments, you were not only reminded of the Lord's commands but you needed to remember to do them. This blue fringe also reminded those who saw your garments of God's commandments. If we are not reminded of the Lord's commandments and to do them our own heart will cause us to do that which is right in our own eyes and we will become unfaithful to the Lord.

### MEMORIAL STONES

**Joshua 4:7** "Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a **memorial** unto the children of Israel for ever."

Here is another memorial that the nation of Israel needed to remind them that it was the Lord that opened the Jordan river that they could cross over into the land. They crossed over when the waters were at their peak. This miracle of stopping the waters of the Jordan River so that the Israel could cross on dry land was not only for them to remember, but it also showed to the nations the power of the God of Israel. We need to be reminded that our God is powerful and does not always wait to do something for us when it is easy to do.

### PURIM A MEMORIAL

**Esther 9:28** "And *that* these days *should be remembered* and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and *that these days of Purim* should **not fail** from among the Jews, nor the **memorial** of them perish from their seed."

In the book of Esther we find another memorial given to remind the nation of Israel that even when the laws of the land can not be changed, God can deliver. Purim was a celebration established in Esther 9:22 "As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor." This memorial celebration was given to commemorate the deliverance of Israel from their enemies when the law of the land was against them.

### BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

**Malachi 3:16** "Then they that **feared the LORD spake often one to another**: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a **book of remembrance** was written before him for them that **feared the LORD**, and that **thought upon his name**."

I do not think that the Lord can forget, but he is writing a book that will rehearsed before Him the names and conversations of those who fear Him. The Lord never tires of hearing the things that honor Him. The Lord has a host of heavenly beings that are constantly saying "Holy, Holy, Holy" continually. This verse should encourage us to fear the Lord and to think on his name. This activity is something to be remembered.

### MELCHIZEDEK - PRIEST

**Genesis 14:18-19** "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth **bread** and **wine**: and he was the **priest** of the most high God. 19. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:"

Here in Genesis 14 we have the incident Melchizedek king of Salem bringing forth bread and wine to bless Abraham. Abraham had fellowship with Melchizedek in the eating of bread and the

drinking of the fruit of the vine. As Abraham was under Melchizedek we also are under Jesus Christ our high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Melchizedek introduced bread and wine as did the Lord Jesus Christ. The bread and wine speak of good things that are coming under the new covenant in His blood.

### OUR HIGH PRIEST

**Hebrews 9:11** "But **Christ** being come an **high priest** of good **things to come**, . . ."

Jesus Christ has become our high priest after the order of Melchisedec. As our high priest he is interceding on our behalf of good thing to come. When Israel saw Joseph's bones what did they think of? They were reminded of good things that are coming. Joseph's bones reminded Israel of the land flowing with milk and honey.

### TO PROCLAIM THE DEATH

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26** "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24. And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my **body**, which is broken for you: this do in **remembrance** of me.

This communion table is a table that has bread and wine on it to stir up our remembrance of what the Lord did for us and is doing for us today. This table is a memorial. We taste the Matzo bread and the grape juice to stimulate the physical as well as the mental thoughts of the sacrifices that the Lord made for us.

25. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood (shed for many): this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in **remembrance** of me.

Matthew 26:28 "For this is my **blood** of the new testament, which is **shed for many** for the remission of sins." Who are the many? The many are those who have been called unto his kingdom and glory and into fellowship with His Son. 1 Thessalonians 2:12 "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." 1 Corinthians 1:9 "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

### THE DEATH

26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do **show** [preach, proclaim, teach] the Lord's [the] **death** [thanatos] **till he come**."

The word **show** is not a good translation of the Greek word. It could be better translated **preach, proclaim** and **teach**. What are we to preach and teach? We are to preach and teach **the death** of the Lord Jesus Christ until he comes. This **the death** [θανατος] was the death that Jesus Christ experienced in the garden of Gethsemane when he cried Abba, Father and not when he died on the cross. With the definite article *the* before the word thanatos says that this was a particular and distinct death.

Jesus Christ is God, but when he experience **the death** He was placed under God the Father in the God head. The New American Standard Version of the Bible presents it very clear. Philippians 2:6 "who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard **equality with God** a thing to be **grasped**," We know the chain of command changed in 1 Corinthians 11:3 "But I would have you know, that the **head** of every **man** is **Christ**; and the **head** of the **woman** *is* the **man**; and the **head** of **Christ** *is* **God**." Before Gethsemane God was not the head of Christ they were equal. This reduction in rank is what we would experience if Christ had not taken it upon himself.

Does that mean that we can not be reduced in rank when it comes to his coming kingdom? No. We can perish and loose our inheritance in the battle against principalities and powers in heavenly places as did Achan, in type, at the battle of Jericho when he robbed God of gold, silver and raiment. The loss of our inheritance does not mean we loose our salvation.

### **THANATOS IN GETHSEMANE**

**Mark 14:34** "And saith unto them, My **soul** is exceeding sorrowful unto [to] **death** [thanatos]: tarry ye here, and watch."

The bread and the wine help us to preach His death in Gethsemane. Our thoughts are stirred of this event as we read about it in Mark 14.

This passage tells us that his soul was exceeding sorrowful to death. This time in the garden it seems to be the most trying time for the Lord. We can see that in Luke 22:43-44 "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. 44. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The stress because of his agony was such that his sweat was as great drops of blood. The Father sent an angel to minister to him as the Father did when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness. This step down in the God head would be for eternity, but the death on the cross would be temporary, three days and three nights.

### **DEATH FOR LITTLE CHILDREN**

**Hebrews 2:14** "Forasmuch then as the **children** [little children] are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through [the] **death** he might destroy him that had the power of [the] **death**, that is, the devil;"

As Joseph's bones reminded Israel of better things to come, the bread and wine remind the little children of that heavenly inheritance in the kingdom that they seek to enter.

Here in verse 14 we have the definite article before thanatos to differentiate between the death in the garden and death on the cross. These two deaths are mentioned in Hebrews 2:9 "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of [the] death [thanatos], crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste [the] death [thanatos] for every man." His death on the cross was for every man. The death in the garden was for the little children who are brethren. We will that it is the little children that enter into the kingdom.

Jesus death in the garden was the means by which God was able to limited the power of the Satan to cause us to perish and be reduced in rank in the coming kingdom.

### **LITTLE CHILDREN**

**Matthew 18:3** "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, **and** become as **little children**, ye shall **not enter into the kingdom of heaven**."

If you are saved you will see the kingdom. If you become a little child you will enter into the kingdom of the heavens. To become a little child today is the same thing that Christ did in the garden of Gethsemane. He suffered a reduction in rank in the Godhead. When we become little children we are reduced in rank and become a servant of servants. Matthew 20:26-27 "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:"

When it comes to entering into the kingdom of the heavens Satan is very strongly opposed to us qualifying to reign with Christ. He knows that if we qualify to enter the kingdom and reign with

him we will have been a good and faithful servant. A good and faithful servant is one who did not make shipwreck of the faith.

We need the memorials experienced in fellowship as well as the memorial of breaking of bread to encourage us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. As Israel bore the burden of carrying the bones of Joseph to his resting place at Shechem, we need to bear the burden of coming apart for fellowship in the word and the communion table.

### HEAVENLY KINGDOM

**2 Peter 1:10-13** "Wherefore the rather, brethren, **give diligence** to make your **calling** and **election sure**: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11. For so an **entrance** shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the **everlasting [age-lasting] kingdom** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Last Sunday we focused our lesson on the blessing of Jacob on the sons of Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob placed Ephraim, the second born, over Manasseh. This gave Ephraim the birthright blessing as well as the blessing of being over Manasseh and another further brothers if Joseph had any other sons.

When we study the life of Ephraim who was given the better inheritance lost it. What Peter is telling us here in verses 10 and 11 is not to do what Ephraim did by living in lawlessness. There is a heavenly kingdom which is a better inheritance and in type the blessing of the firstborn son. We can enter into that age-lasting kingdom if we make our calling and election sure. In picture and type, Ephraim did not make his calling and election sure. Ephraim did not allow himself to be reminded of a better inheritance. Memorials in his life were not important. Pleasing God was not a high priority in his life.

12. **Wherefore** (conjunction) I will not be negligent to put you always in **remembrance** of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

The conjunction "Wherefore" ties verse 12 to verse 11 which tells us of an abundant entrance into the coming kingdom of our Lord. Peter had been an eye witness of the heavenly kingdom when he was on the mount of transfiguration and he makes mention of that event in the context of this passage. 2 Peter 1:17-18 "For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." Peter is basically saying I know the value of entering into the kingdom of the heavens and I want to stir up your remembrance so that you will not forget its value. You do not want to sell that blessed privilege for one morsel of earthly pleasure. Memorials can become a mundane activity so that it loses its meaning and Peter said that even though you know these things, it is still profitable to continue to hear the exhortation over and over.

The communion table is a memorial of good things that are coming. Jesus Christ is our high priest after the order of Melchisedec and just as Melchisedec brought bread and wine for Abraham, the Lord has provided a table of bread and wine for us. This table reminds of two events. The bread speaks of his death on the cross. The wine speaks of the death in the garden that we might receive the salvation of our souls.

13. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in **remembrance**;"

Are we allowing His word to stir us up to have a fervent in spirit in serving the Lord? There were some who came out of Egypt with Joseph's bone that were encouraged to go into the land but

there were other that were not encouraged by his bones to take the land. Carrying the memorial of better things ahead, symbolized in Joseph's bones, for the first two years did not help most of those who came out of Egypt. Only Joshua and Caleb took the bone of Joseph seriously and they entered the land flowing with milk and honey.

We have a sure Word of prophecy. From the Young's Literal Translation 2 Peter 1:19 "And we have more firm the prophetic word, to which we do well giving heed, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, till day may dawn, and a morning star may arise -- in your hearts;" The prophetic word should be a lamp and morning star in a dark place so that we give heed to that prophetic word in our hearts.

May God help us not to lose sight of the blessing of entering into his coming kingdom and glory and keep ourselves from idols and the sins of the flesh.