

Joseph's Bones The Bones of Hope - Part 1

Well, today on "It's a Good Life," I'd like for us to start our study in the Old Testament. If you would, get your Bible and turn to the book of Genesis, chapter 50. We're going to be looking at verses 22-26, and of course, we'll be looking at other verses as well. While you're getting your Bible and you're turning to that section of Scripture, let me title this lesson today, "Joseph's Bones," or "The Bones of Hope."

Some people do not believe that we should actually look in the Old Testament for learning, that we should only look to the New Testament, but we need to understand that God has given His whole Word for our admonition. In fact, in Romans 15:4, I want to look at a couple of reasons that we are to look into the Old Testament Scriptures.

Romans 15:4 says: *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

We see first of all here that those things were written in the Old Testament, and it talks about "written aforetime"... That's in the Old Testament. It was written for our learning, so we could learn, that "through patience"... in other words, don't get in a hurry... that "through patience and comfort," things will come along in our lives that would cause us problems. We are to have patience and we're to be comforted through the Old Testament Scriptures and that, through that comfort of hope in the Old Testament Scriptures, we would have hope.

Then in I Corinthians 10:11, it says, *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples... [or examples]... and they are written for our admonition... [our learning]...*

upon whom the ends of the world are come. We know we're living in the last days and we need all the help we can get, and the best help we can get comes from God. As we look into the Scriptures, we find that hope. We find the learning that's necessary for us as Christians to have that hope in expectation of seeing our Savior soon.

Something else I would like for you to notice now is in Genesis 50:22-26. This is a prophecy that was given. It says there: *²²And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. ²³And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees. ²⁴And 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. [Now, keep in mind that this is Biblical prophecy.] ²⁵And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. ²⁶So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.*

Now, we know that by comparing Scripture with Scripture Joseph's bones lay in Egypt for 300 years. However, the fulfillment finally came in Exodus 13:9. It says this is the fulfillment of his bones being taken back. Exodus 13:19 says: *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.*

Remember, the children of Israel came out of Egypt and Moses was the leader. He

remembered that Joseph had said for the children of Israel to take his bones back home, and this is exactly what Moses did. He gathered up the bones.

And then we read in Joshua 24:32 and see the fulfillment of this. *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.*

So we see that, by looking into the Scriptures that I've just read with you, Joseph had said, "When you come out of Egypt when you're set free, children of Israel, you are to take my bones back home. You're to take my bones and bury them."

Well, we know that, as Moses took the bones, the Israelites wandered through the wilderness for 40 years, so they had Joseph's bones with them for 40 years until they were able to come into the land. And we see in Joshua 24:32 the fulfilled prophecy came to pass as the bones were buried where Joseph wanted his bones to be buried.

Let's look at something now, the lesson we can learn regarding Joseph's bones. First of all, I see that every one of us must die, and this reminds me of my mortality and your mortality. God had originally intended that man eat of the tree of life and live forever. We read about this in Genesis 3. Remember, after Eve gave Adam to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, something happened.

In Genesis 3:22-24, it says, *²²And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: ²³Therefore the*

LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. ²⁴So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Originally, God had intended for man to eat of that tree. Remember, he did not give Adam the command not to eat of the tree of life. He said, "Don't eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

Notice in Genesis 2:17, God said, *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

In Genesis 3:19, we see that, after Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, what happened here. It says, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

It was because of Adam that all people die, because he disobeyed God. God said, "In the day that you eat of that tree, you shall surely die." So we see that physical death came upon Adam because of his disobedience to God, and this reminds me once again of my mortality that one day I, too, will die physically, just as you will.

There are two exceptions where men escape death in the Bible. In Genesis 5:24, it says, *And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.* In Hebrews 11:5, it says, *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*

And then we see someone else in II Kings 2:11, *And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*

So we see two exceptions to physical death during their lifetime, or during the time that they were on this earth, and that was Enoch and Elijah. I believe that, if you study the Scriptures of the prophetic Word of God, you'll see in the book of Revelation how that, I believe, these two men come back and they will eventually die a physical death. They would be, I believe, the two witnesses mentioned there in the book of Revelation.

Notice this as well. The passing of time lulls us into a false security like the rich man. In other words, we know we're going to die, but there seems to be a false sense of security that takes over our lives. In Luke 12:19-21, the rich man said, *¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. ²⁰But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? ²¹So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

God wants all of us to accept His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior, but this rich man wouldn't do it. There's nothing wrong with being rich as long as you do not put those riches before God, before accepting Jesus Christ. If you place your trust in your riches, you're wrong, because all of us die physically.

Notice this as well. Joseph said, "I die," and he died being 110 years old. In his death there was a lesson for Israel and for us. Ecclesiastes 7:2 says, *It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting:*

for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

Notice once again, this reminds us of our mortality. One day, the grim reaper will come, as we speak of death... the grim reaper... we all will die just as Joseph died. In Psalm 90:12, it says, *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

If you want to be wise, the first thing you need to understand today is that one day you will die and after death there is no way that you will be united with or come to God. Today is the day of salvation, the Bible says. Now is the accepted time.

There are two deaths, and we'll talk about that later in another lesson. There are two deaths—physical and spiritual. All of us die physically, but all of us are not dead spiritually. Why? Because we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and our Savior.

I wonder if you've done that. Have you trusted Jesus to save you today? That means to ask Him to come into your heart, to receive Him, to believe that He was crucified, buried, and resurrected. He came into this world to seek and to save those who were lost. He wants to save you today, and if you'll trust Him to save you, if you'll ask Him to come into your heart, He will save you if you pray something like this: "Lord, I believe that You died for me. I know I can't save myself. I want You to save me. I trust You. Please come into my heart. I want you as my Savior." If you'll pray a prayer like that, God will save you today.

It's been good being with you today, and next time we'll pick up where we left off about Joseph's bones, the bones of hope. In the meantime, let me invite you to look at our Website, www.LRWM.org. On the Website, you'll find helps for you to study the Bible and

it will also tell you more about how to be saved.

Remember, I'm praying for you as you listen to these programs that you will grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, and if you've never trusted Him, that you will trust Him and receive Him as your Savior.

Until the next time, may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.