

Day 31 of “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

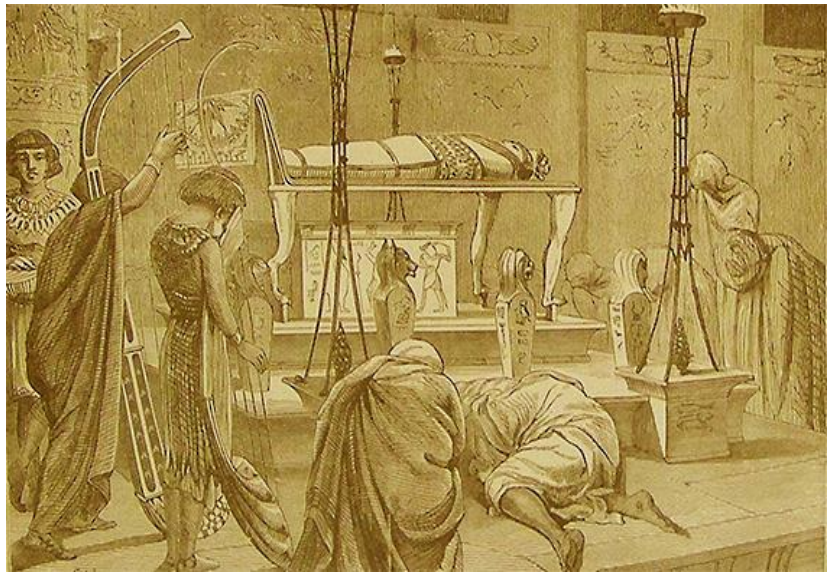
Jan. 31, 2016

- Genesis 49-50 – Jacob’s and Joseph’s last days.
- Hebrews 12-13 – Final Warning; Epilogue.
- Ecclesiastes 12:9-14 – Epilogue.

Reflections:

1. The last verse of Genesis, “they embalmed him and he was put in a coffin” closes the book of Genesis. All its recorded dealings of God with Israel, and all the promises and the glories of the patriarchal line, end with ‘a coffin in Egypt.’ This ending is striking when we understand that three hundred years intervenes between the last events in Genesis and the first in Exodus. For these three centuries Israel was left with a mummy and a hope. The elaborately embalmed body of Joseph lay in its gilded and pictured case, somewhere in Goshen, and was, no doubt, in the care of the Israelites, as is plain from the fact that they carried it with them at the exodus. For three centuries, that silent ‘coffin in Egypt’ preached a message not only of the death of one generation and the beginning of another in the plan of God but of hope. Moreover, Joseph’s death, like the death of every person, reminds us of our morality: we too come and go. Each person has the privilege of making something out of his life, which is only possible by making the Lord the issue in life. Up to the very end,

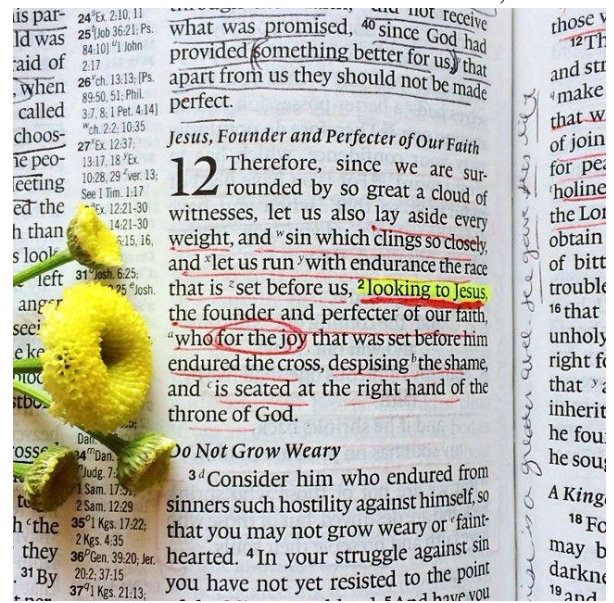
Joseph trusted the Lord and was honored for that trust by God Himself: **Hebrews 11:22**, *By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.* He knew that God would deliver the Israelites from Egypt



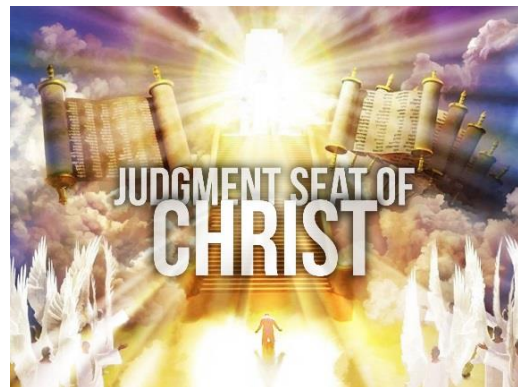
and take his bones to the promised land: **Exodus 13:19** And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God shall surely take care of you; and you shall carry my bones from here with you."

2. Hebrews 12-13. In 12:1-2 we are told that we Christians are in a spiritual race and that we must to put off weights and sins that so easily entangles us. The point is that if we are to run well, we must run “light.” The two things that the writer points out are “weights” and “sins.” Sins are outright violations of the Word of God. Weights are not in and of

themselves sins. Since weights as such are not sins, they often become much more of a problem than sins. As Bible believers, we know what sin is and can deal with them through God's grace of 1 John 1:9. Weights, however, are much more subtle—they are often harder to recognize. Weights are those things that are legitimate in themselves. Consider some the things that in themselves are legitimate: watching television, posting on and scrolling through Facebook, text messaging, and working one's way up the ladder of human success. Certainly, no sound Christian would ever say that it is a sin to watch a television or spend time engaging in social media or doing your best to be the best at work and advancing in your occupation. However, each of these activities can absolutely kill your spiritual life by weighing you down with all kinds of distractions. Moreover, they can drain you so that you have little to no time or *energy* for the Lord, the things of God, or the people of God. They can so take up your time that you no longer have time to be alone with your God in quiet and deep reflection, let alone for daily study of His Word or to gather with and encourage fellow believers. Only by making the Lord and His Word top priority can the believer run lightly, successfully advancing and actually enjoying the temporal blessings of God, which make great servants but horrendous masters. In sum, weights are anything that keep us from focusing on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith because we are so focused on other "stuff."



3. Ecclesiastes 12:9-14. Note the concluding two verses: "Every person" means "every person," believer and unbeliever alike. While believers will never be condemned for their sins, all believers will be judged according to their works and this will include negative consequences as far as praise or blame and rewards or loss of rewards. Note the words of the apostle Paul in **2 Corinthians 5:10** *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.* ¹¹ *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord. Yes, terror!* This is exactly how Ecclesiastes ends: respect God and know that you will be judged for what you do with your life here—a judgment that will last throughout eternity in the form of rewards and privileges or lack thereof.



On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don