

Genesis 48-50

Joseph's Family saga is coming to a close.

And with the close of this Patriarch's life we will also close the book of Genesis.

So we have seen thus far Joseph's life has been full of turmoil and hardship.

However; we saw that God had a bigger plan in the works beyond Joseph's life.

God was building a nation, and chose Joseph to go through those hard times, to set him up to deliver this Hebrew family.

What Satan meant for evil, God used it for Good.

Now we have a lesson here for us.

We can be consumed with our happiness, and our state of comfort, our position, and our well-being in this life.

How people treat us, or even how fair life should be.

Or we can look to the bigger narrative, the God narrative or Meta-Narrative.

You see God has a work for each of us to accomplish for His glory.

However most of the time we are more concerned about our own personal narrative.

We have to rise above our own lives and see God's plan for us.

Eph. 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

This means your lives are not ordinary, this means everywhere you go; God is working around you, and wants to use you in His plan.

You see... your friends and co-workers are not here by chance; your teachers, or bosses are not there by accident.

You have works planned out already to choose to walk in, to be a minister of light to everyone around you.

You see this is what Joseph learned through all his travail, that there is no chance; life is not a series of random events that have no meaning.

Everything is for a purpose.

So let's finish up our story...

Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons(Heb. 11:21)

48:1 Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, "Indeed your father is sick"; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2 And Jacob was told, "Look, your son Joseph is coming to you"; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed.

It seems Joseph after establishing his family in Goshen went back to rule Egypt in On.

He received word that his father was about to die.

He took his two boys and brings them to Jacob to be blessed.

3 Then Jacob said to Joseph: "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, 4 and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.' 5 And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. 6 Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. 7 But as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

Jacob now in the presence of his two grandsons tells of his life.

He explains that God has blessed him, and even appeared to him.

He told his grandsons about the promises that God gave to him.

He would be a nation, and Joseph's two sons would be a part of this nation.

Jacob claims them on God's authority.

And they will be forever a part of the tribes of Israel.

He speaks then of their grandmother's death.

His true love... and then continues on...

8 Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who are these?"

9 Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me in this place."

And he said, "Please bring them to me, and I will bless them." 10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. 11 And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"

What an amazing moment here for Jacob.

For all those years he thought his son was dead, the agony this man felt for 22 years.

Then the impossible happened, he finds out his son, is not only alive, but a ruler in Egypt.

And now here he gets to embrace the grandchildren of his once thought to be dead son.

Now I must be getting kind of sappy the older I get.

Or maybe it's my two daughters and son, but this moment was really never a big deal to me.

However, now I see the greatness of this moment, and it is awesome.

So now Jacob will bless these two grandsons in an unusual manner...

12 So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. 13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. 14 Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn.

Now Jacob does something terribly wrong according to the culture of the day.

It was the oldest that was supposed to be blessed by the right hand.

The hand of authority, the hand of official blessing.

And he blesses them knowing he is going against the norm of the culture...

15 And he blessed Joseph, and said:

"God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has fed me all my life long to this day, 16 The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

17 Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18 And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

Now Joseph perhaps a little worried here.

He knew his father's story of tricking Esau, maybe he thought it would bring the family bad fortune if it happened again.

However, Jacob must have done this according to what God had revealed to him.

He says this is no accident, the younger will be greater.

And this is not unlike God to do.

God often chooses the unlikely person to do the greater things.

He often chooses the most overlooked person.

Remember King David was the youngest; his father did not even bring him in the room when the selection for king was being made.

Remember how Samuel was rebuked for who he thought should be king?

1 Sam 16:7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Or even as we saw last Sunday, Jesus began His selection for the leaders of His New Movement, and they were fishermen.

They would be despised by the religious elite, and those who were more qualified.

My father always taught me, when people aspiring to be in ministry and they start to give you their qualifications as to why they are the best, most qualified person for a ministry position, he says that ambitious person, usually disqualifies themselves.

He taught me to look for the humble, the one that no one else could think anything great would come from, who has a healthy idea of who they are in Christ.

Much like Peter when He was called into ministry... who said in **Luke 5:8 ~~When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying,~~ "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"**

These inadequate servants, God then equips and makes adequate.

That no man can glory in his abilities, and God will get the glory for the work done.

In this Kingdom, God chooses the uneducated, the untrained, the unskilled to do great things with.

And all through scripture we see God making his selection not as man would, but he sees the heart, and that is what He is concerned with.

Look at verse 20, I imagine Jacob has been in prayer about this moment as he lay on his bed, and I believe God showed him who to bless in this manner and what to say, and we read on...

20 So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. 22 Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

So Jacob left Joseph with this promise that the Israelites would indeed go back to the land promised to them.

This seems to be an unreasonable request, all the work to take Jacob back.

What is the point of this?

Well Jacob was leaving a legacy of faith.

This journey back to bury Jacob would serve as a stone of remembrance for this nation.

This would remind them, that Egypt was not the promised land, that Canaan was.

And Jacob turns their hearts to that land...

And Joseph would return to bury his dad as we will see tonight.

But it is his descendants that will receive this portion of land that Jacob himself took from the Amorites.

Joseph's family would receive a portion more than his brother's descendants.

So next Jacob will bless his other sons...

Jacob's Last Words to His Sons

49:1 And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days:

2 "Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, And listen to Israel your father.

3 "Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. 4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled it — He went up to my couch.

This is an unfortunate statement.

This was Jacob's firstborn, what a delight to Jacob when he came into the world.

He hoped he would be his might, the beginning of his strength. The Excellency of dignity and power.

But Reuben, who had great potential, removed himself from this calling by his poor choices.

Remember he slept with Jacob's wife, his half-brothers mother.

And he never repented.

He thought he had gotten away with his sin.

Until when he was supposed to receive the blessing of the eldest son and he did not.

And Reuben's descendants never entered into the promise land, they took their inheritance on the other side of the river.

Some live as though their sins will never find them out, they think God has missed it.

But sin that is not repented of will always find you out.

I would suggest if any of you are hiding some secret sin, take care of it tonight, confess to God, ask for forgiveness and turn from it.

You don't want to miss all the potential God has for your life.

5 "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. 6 Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel.

And remember these two boys went in and murdered all who were in Shechem because of their sister Dinah.

They had a fierce anger, and because of it they were scattered among Israel.

Simeon was never able to take all their inheritance in the land of Canaan, and were eventually taking out and became one of the lost tribes of Israel when Assyria conquered them.

Levi's descendants became the priest of Israel, and never received a portion of their own in the land.

So next we move on to the one who assumed the leadership position in the family.

I imagine after losing his two oldest sons, and the embarrassing encounter with his daughter in law, where he impregnated her after she dressed as a prostitute.

I imagine after selling his brother Joseph into slavery and living with the guilt of that decision, after all of these things, Judah seems to be humbled.

We never see the older brothers ever really come to this place of humility.

And Judah bearing fruits of repentance as we saw last time, wanting to take the place of imprisonment for his brother Benjamin, is a changed man.

And in his humility, and repentance God has big plans for this son of Jacob...

8 "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. 11 Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. 12 His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.

Judah means praise and would be praised by his brethren.

He would be strong and courageous as a lion.

His tribe along with Benjamin stayed the most faithful to God.

And they were blessed and fruitful everywhere they went.

Also from Judah an eternal scepter would be given to his descendants.

King David being the first and Jesus being the last and final ruler from the line of Judah.

In fact, Jesus is referred to as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

In verse 10 Jacob speaks of Shiloh or the Prince of Peace, this is speaking of the promised Messiah that would come through Judah.

And we see God chose this humbled son of Jacob, to have the honor of bringing that Seed of a Woman that was promised back in the Garden of Eden.

The Savior would come through the line of Judah.

And Jesus fulfilled this prophecy...

Jesus came and died, rose again, and now has this Scepter eternally.

Awesome turn around by Judah and this shows the reach of the grace of God, for those who repent, and come humbly before Him...

Now Jacob will turn to Leah's 2 other sons who seem to be standing next to Judah...

13 "Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He shall become a haven for ships, And his border shall adjoin Sidon.

And when Joshua appoints Zebulun their inheritance it was up toward the sea to the River before Jokneam.

And not much else is given about Zebulun...

Now there is in fact not much said about these next tribes as well.

They all but Judah and Benjamin were taken captive by Assyria, and became what would be known as the lost ten tribes.

14 "Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between two burdens; 15 He saw that rest was good, And that the land was pleasant; He bowed his shoulder to bear a burden, And became a band of slaves.

This speaks of Issachar's possible strength and doom at the same time.

What we know of Issachar's tribe is this

1 Chron. 12:32 of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do...

It seems with their knowledge they never really excelled.

And these pleasant lands seemed to attract enemies who conquer them, and receive tribute from the tribe of Issachar.

16 "Dan shall judge his people As one of the tribes of Israel. 17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, A viper by the path, That bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward. 18 I have waited for your salvation, O Lord!

Dan will lead all the tribes except Judah and Benjamin into idolatry.

When the Kingdom of Israel is divided into two, Dan leads the way into rebellion against God.

In Judges we will see in a time when Israel did what was right in their own eyes, this tribe of Dan will have a strange story of idolatry and wickedness.

They are interestingly enough removed from the list of tribes in Revelation 7 that would be sealed through the Great Tribulation.

Some commentators associate this with their rebellion toward Yahweh, and leading the people into idolatry.

His decedents will truly be a viper biting at the heal of this nation.

In fact, it would be Jeroboam, in Dan's territory would lead a rebellion that would ultimately divide the kingdom.

Jacob having insight to what would come of these sons, inserts here in verse 18, how he has waited for salvation from the Lord.

I imagine as he looked into what would come of this nation from his family, he longed more than ever for the Kingdom of God to come.

Maybe it was the mention of the serpent, that triggered this from Jacob, as it reminds him of the greater narrative, God will bring salvation through a promised Seed.

And we have the first mention of salvation in scripture or Yeshuah, which is none other than the name of Jesus.

Jacob perhaps having this reminder that this fallen world's only hope, even for his chosen family, is this salvation only God could provide through His Promised Son.

So Next...

19 "Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, But he shall triumph at last.

Gad stayed with Rueben on the east side of the Jordan River, never entering in the promise land, they were the farthest east, so they would be most susceptible to attack.

Gad which means troop would be able to defend itself, until they too were taken by the Assyrians and assimilated into the lost 10 tribes of Israel.

20 "Bread from Asher shall be rich, And he shall yield royal dainties.

Asher would enjoy rich delicacies, but in the end fell to insignificance.

21 "Naphtali is a deer let loose; He uses beautiful words.

Naphtali would be swift warriors and would be people of eloquent speech.

We have a record of one from this tribe writing a song with Deborah in Judges 5.

Next...

22 "Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall. 23 The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him.

24 But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), 25 By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. 26 The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.

Jacob speaks of Joseph's fruit from his life.

His tree was so fruitful, that it blessed his whole family.

Even though his brothers grieved him, he remained fruitful unto God, and his fruit saved his family.

And he is now ruler over his family.

Notice for Joseph to be fruitful for God's plan and purpose, he had to go through enormous trials full of deceit, betrayal, and heartache that was deep into his soul.

However, God through those great trials blessed him above all of his family.

Are you asking to be great in the Kingdom of God, hold on for great trials?

You are going through great trials right now, hold on for a great purpose.

27 "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he shall devour the prey, And at night he shall divide the spoil."

Benjamin throughout scripture has descendants that are warriors.

King Saul came from this line, and we see the prophecy was true when we look at his life.

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing.

Jacob's Death and Burial

29 Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 30 in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. 31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. 32 The field and the cave

that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth."
 33 And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

His final instructions were to bury him in the family burial place.

And with that he lies down and dies.

Burial of Jacob

50:1 Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him, and kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. 3 Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

The embalming process by the Egyptians was an interesting thing.

I got this from the How Stuff Works Health Website...

Egyptian Mummification: Embalming

They laid the body out on a wooden table and prepared to remove the [brain](#). To get into the cranium, the embalmers had to hammer a chisel through the bone of the nose. Then they inserted a long, iron hook into the skull and slowly pulled out the brain matter. Once they had removed most of the brain with the hook, they used a long spoon to scoop out any remaining bits. Finally, they rinsed the skull with [water](#). Surprisingly, the brain was one of the few organs the [Egyptians](#) did not try to preserve. They weren't sure what it was for, but they assumed you wouldn't need it in the next world.

After they had removed the brain, the embalmers took a special blade made from [obsidian](#) (a sacred stone) and made a small incision along the left side of the body. They carefully removed the abdominal organs through this slit, setting each

one aside (with the exception of the [kidneys](#), which the Egyptians did not hold as important). After removing these organs, the embalmers cut open the diaphragm to remove the [lungs](#). The Egyptians believed that the [heart](#) was the core of a person, the seat of emotion and the mind, so they almost always left it in the body. The other organs were washed, coated with resin, wrapped in linen strips and stored in decorative pottery. These vessels, which Egyptologists dubbed **canopic jars**, protected the organs for passage to the next world.

Once they removed the organs, the embalmers rinsed the empty chest cavity with **palm wine**, in order to purify it. Then, to maintain the body's lifelike form, they filled the cavity with incense and other material. This kept the skin from shrinking down inside the cavity when the body was dried out. ~~In the next section, we'll look at this drying procedure and see how the body was finally prepared for the next world~~

After the embalmers removed the organs and re-stuffed the body, they laid the body down on a sloped board and covered it completely with **natron** powder. The [Egyptians](#) collected this powder, a mixture of **sodium compounds**, from the shores of Egyptian lakes in the desert west of the Nile Delta. Unlike the hot sand that dried the earliest Egyptian mummies, the salty natron absorbed moisture without severely darkening and hardening the skin.

The embalmers left the body in the powder for 35 to 40 days to allow enough time for the body to dry completely. During this waiting period, somebody had to stand guard, as the body's strong odor attracted desert scavengers. After the 40 days were finished, the body was brought to the **Wabet**, the "House of Purification." The embalmers removed the incense and other stuffing from the body cavity and refilled it with natron, resin-soaked linen and various other materials. In some eras, to make the desiccated body more lifelike, the embalmers also stuffed material under the skin in the arms, legs and head. When the body was fully stuffed, the embalmers sewed up the incisions and covered the skin with a resin layer in order to keep moisture out. The body was then ready for the wrapping, or **bandaging**, procedure.

So Jacob is embalmed.

And I imagine if we could ever find this cave with all these patriarchs in them, Jacob's body would be found like that of King Tut, and still very much intact.

Moving on...

4 Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, 5 'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am dying; 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 come back.'"

6 And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8 as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. 9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering.

10 Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and they mourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. He observed seven days of mourning for his father. 11 And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a deep mourning of the Egyptians." Therefore its name was called Abel Mizraim (Mourning of Egypt), which is beyond the Jordan.

12 So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them. 13 For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. 14 And after he had buried his father,

Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.

So we see the respect and gratefulness toward this family.

Egypt was saved by Joseph, son of Jacob.

They were thankful for him, and honored him accordingly.

So now that Jacob is dead, Joseph's brothers have a concern.

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him."

16 So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, 17 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you.'" Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

18 Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants."

19 Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? 20 But as for you, you meant evil

against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. 21 Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Now we don't know if Jacob really asked this or if the brothers lied.

Nonetheless Joseph does not enact revenge; in fact, he understood everything to be the plan of God.

This is the overall lesson for all of us here tonight.

Yes, Satan will bring great trials upon your life, he will try to destroy you and the plan God has for your lives.

But again you must hold your heads up, and see the plan of God over your own desires.

God has a plan for this family to be a great nation.

And Joseph saw and understood that that was more important than his own comfort and well-being.

Let's look at what he says at the end of his life, we see faith here.

Death of Joseph(Heb. 11:22)

22 So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. 23 Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third

generation. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees.

24 And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." 26 So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

At the end of his life, he still believes God has a plan for his family.

He in faith asks them to bury him in the promise land.

What an example for us.

This life is about God getting glory, not us.

This is hard to see in our narcissistic world.

We love ourselves, and our well-being.

We want our way or no way.

And when this is our thought pattern we miss the overall picture of what God is going to do.

And this is true for the ministry here in Victorville.

And I have learned that this ministry can never be about any man.

I, like Joseph believe there are great days ahead for this this church, promises for a great future.

Our vision for this ministry is to not build anything around a person or a group of people.

We want to cast a vision that one day we will hand the reigns over to a trained up group of younger Christians.

I believe a lot of the decline in churches across America is that the vision for ministry is for certain time, that time only being now, and when those from that time began to fade out, the ministry dies out with that generation.

Here at the end of this book, we see the vision was cast for the future.

The next generations would have enormous trials ahead, but this man Joseph asks them when they leave, to take his bones with them.

Every generation after that would wonder if they would be the ones who would have this honor.

You see this kept their focus forward.

And you know we will get in trouble when we start staking claim to our desires and wants.

I want to keep the vision pointed forward.

Our children and those young people we raise up will take this gospel farther, to places we will never see, to people we will never know.

They will be the Kingdom of God in a time we will never see.

We need to help them see this.

If we build Calvary Chapel Victorville around our wants and desires, and it becomes a place about me, and for me, and fulfills my desires, it will quickly turn into a cemetery.

Just today I have witness this vision lived out in a wonderful picture for me.

You see our Secretary Connie, who has been in this church for 10 years, she has worked here for 4 years.

She has been through ups and downs in the ministry, at times she held things together for this church.

She loved her position here.

Connie in the last few months has been training up another young lady to take her place as she is looking to retire.

And I stood back and watched Connie, she didn't hold onto anything here, she poured into Cynthia all the discipleship and training she needed to take the reins.

Connie humbly allowed Cynthia to take her place, and slowly fade out of the office.

Now the thing that blessed me so much, was the joy Connie had doing this.

There are natural emotions that go with transitioning to another person.

You can get the “mine” attitude.

But Connie embodied the vision here, that all of us are one day going to be gone, and we have to be like Joseph and look ahead.

And that is a good place to be. Connie finished that position well.

I know she will continue to be a blessing in the Children’s ministry here, because she understands the value and importance of those little ones in her classroom, that one day they too will become the pastor’s, ministry leaders, missionaries, and church secretaries of the church.

So we have finished the Book of Genesis, and we see the end of this chapter is really the beginning of the next.

And next we will embark on a great Exodus, and almost 400 years will pass, as God builds a great nation

through trial and turmoil, and He will raise up a great leader to carry out the promises made to this nation.

So our encouragement this evening, is to look to the big picture, try to see past your little blimp on the timeline of history.

May everything we do be done for God's Glory, may strive to live for God's Story, and prepare the next generation for their place, so they may pass it on to their children.

This is all that matters, don't get caught up in building your own little kingdoms.

You will miss out on this great purpose, when you build your own kingdom, ego, pride, and the exaltation of self, hinder any movement in God's Kingdom.

Anyway, greater things are ahead, you don't want to miss out on them!

So let's pray.