



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Faith and Tribulation!

Genesis 47:1-31

Message #47 of 50 – S954

Sermon given on July 18, 2021

@ Calvary Chapel French Valley, Murrieta, CA



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Faith and Tribulation!

Genesis 47:1-31

Opening Comments

- Good morning – we will be in **Genesis 47**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- One of the big questions in life is, ‘Why is there evil in the world?’
- Or similarly, ‘Why do bad things happen to good people?’
- The world has no answer to any of those questions, or really to any of the big questions of life

The reason the world doesn’t have answers to the big questions is the answer to those questions.

- God created everything in this universe as an expression of His power, glory, and love
- He created mankind to bear His divine image out into the world and to live in intimate communion with Him and one another
- The highest thing any human can do is love God with their whole being and to love other humans as they love themselves
- That is the greatest good any person can ever achieve
- Love is a choice – it cannot be forced
- And so, God gave His highest creation the ability to choose to love Him and the other humans around them
- The reason the world doesn’t have the answers to the big questions of life is because God **is** the answer to those questions.
- The reason this world is the way that it is because most people have chosen not to love God
- And because they don’t love God, they are incapable of loving other people as they should
- If everyone loved God and each other as they should, things like racism would cease to exist
- Some might ask, ‘Couldn’t God end racism Himself?’
- Yes – but He would have to eliminate our freewill – to make us love Him and others – He won’t do that
- The only thing that can change this world is revival – people turning to Christ in faith and repentance

- Until Christ comes again and establishes His perfect rule on this earth tribulation is going to be present in this world and our lives

John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

- Don't be freaked out by the bad things going on in the world – trust in Jesus – He has overcome those things
- Not only that but He is going to use them for something good

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

- There is a picture of that truth in our text for today
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us see how God uses tribulation in the world and in our lives
- **Pray**

Teaching

• **Faith and Tribulation!**

- In the last chapter, Jacob arrived in Egypt and was reunited with his son Joseph after believing he was dead for twenty-two years
- Joseph was second only to Pharaoh in power and authority in Egypt
- God put him in that position so that Joseph could protect and provide for his family as God began the work of growing them into a great nation as He had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- One of the ways Joseph protected and provided for his family was to put them in Goshen
- It was a fertile area that was far enough away from the center of Egyptian life that they wouldn't be corrupted but close enough to Joseph that he could care for them
- This chapter opens with Pharaoh meeting some of Joseph's family
- **Genesis 47:1-6**
- It is not clear why Joseph only took five of his brothers and we are not told which five he took – any guesses would be speculation
- They confirm their occupation to Pharaoh and humbly ask to live in Goshen
- Joseph then brings in his father Jacob
- **Genesis 47:7-10**

- Twice Jacob blesses Pharaoh – the godless ruler of Egypt
- Our modern culture cannot comprehend the significance of this event.
- The writer to the Hebrews says something about how blessings flow
Hebrews 7:7

Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.

- Jacob knew that Pharaoh was the most powerful man in the land
- But Jacob also knew that God was ruler over all the kings of the earth, including Pharaoh
- When we come into the presence of people, do we bring them a blessing? Do we leave behind a blessing when we leave?
- **Genesis 47:11-12**

- This is an important fact that might be easily overlooked in this account
- Joseph has complete control over the distribution of food in Egypt during a famine that will last for another five years
- While the rest of Egypt and Canaan have to deal with the results of the famine Jacob and his family do not
- God is able to protect His people and cause them to flourish even in the most difficult of circumstances – trust Him completely
- **Genesis 47:13**

Famine: a widespread scarcity of food, caused by several factors including war, inflation, crop failure, population imbalance, or government policies. This phenomenon is usually accompanied or followed by regional malnutrition, starvation, epidemic, and increased mortality.

- God created humans to be the objects of His love and grace
- Because humans have the ability to choose, they often choose to reject God's love
- But in His mercy He does not reject them **Ephesians 2:4-5**
But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...
- In fact, God loves them and us so much that should someone choose not to respond to His love and grace, that He will send something else to cause them to turn to Him
- He might send a famine of some kind – an extreme scarcity of something to cause them to turn away from whatever they are trusting in rather than God. **Amos 8:11**

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord GOD, “that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.”

- The people of Israel weren't listening to God so He stopped talking to them – in the hopes that they would notice and cry out to Him
- In our text we see three areas the famine affected the Egyptians
- Each of these is something they were trusting in rather than God
- First – **Money**
- **Genesis 47:14-15**
- They couldn't grow food like they normally would – had to buy it
- They also couldn't produce food to sell, money was going out and none was coming in
- Money or the pursuit of wealth can be something that stands in the way of salvation **Matthew 19:23-24**

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

- The love of money, even if you don't have very much, can keep you from loving God and others the way you should
- In the end money always fails us
- The next thing that stands in the way of us loving God and others could be things - **Possessions**
- **Genesis 47:16-17**
- God is a gracious God and loves giving His children good gifts, but we must never covet things or cling to things at the expense of our love of God. **1 John 2:15-17**

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

- Gladly receive the good gifts that God gives but hold them with an open hand.
- Be okay if God, who gave the gift, also chooses to take it away or give it to someone else. Job expressed that memorably **Job 1:21**
“Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

- A third stumbling block to faith is our **Identity** – who or what we are serving
- As the famine continues, the Egyptians have to surrender more and more to Joseph
- **Genesis 47:18-26**
- The people realized that apart from Joseph they would perish.
- That is God’s desire for all humanity.
- God wants all humanity to realize they need Jesus to save them.
- Our culture is encouraging people to embrace their lostness.
- By normalizing behaviors that God disapproves of, people will go through their lives believing that what they are doing is right and good.
- And they will look at anyone who thinks otherwise as unloving and bigoted.
- And they will go onward down a path that leads to destruction and causes pain and suffering along the way.
- There is a story (July 2021) circulating in social media that sounds strange to me but may be common in the not-too-distant future.
- The story is of a couple who had a baby recently.
- The mother is a woman who identifies as a man.
- She is upset because the hospital wants to list her on the birth certificate as the mother – she wants her husband to be listed as the mother.
- She is married to a man who identifies as a woman.
- He attempts to nurse the baby and is upset because the baby is not getting any milk and they resign themselves to having to ‘supplement’ with formula.
- They refuse to identify the gender of the baby because that is something the child will do when “it” is ready.
- They are lost and the culture around them is encouraging them and celebrating their lostness.
- Our prayer should be that God sends a ‘famine’ into their lives that causes them to look for someone to save them.
- And we, as God’s people, must be prepared to lovingly bring them to their Savior Jesus.

- The lost need someone to point them to the way of salvation **John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

- The last three chapters of Genesis will focus on two funerals – first Jacob’s, then Joseph’s
- **Genesis 47:27-31**
- For the last seventeen years of Jacob’s life, he had dwelled in the carnal world of Egypt.
- As he nears the end of his life, he makes Joseph swear to bury him in Canann with his father and grandfather.
- ‘put your hand under my thigh’ – like putting hand on the Bible to swear in court.
- Jacob lived in Egypt, but Egypt did not live in him.
- Brothers and sister, we were created for intimacy with God
- That intimacy is experienced by faith through repentance from the things God disapproves of - obedience to the things He says in His Word, and the expression of love to Him and others
- If there is anything standing in the way of that intimacy, God will lovingly lead you to repentance by His goodness **Romans 2:4**
Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?
- If you don’t willingly surrender whatever is standing in the way of your relationship to God, He will send some kind of famine into your life
- This might be some kind of tribulation – pain and suffering – because your eternal relationship with God is infinitely more important than your temporal comfort
- God loves you so much that He will make you uncomfortable for a while so that you can experience His love more
- Though it would be better if you surrendered fully to His will so that He didn’t have to do that
- Let’s pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us do that - **Prayer!**