

Jacob's Descendants

Jacob's Death and Burial

Genesis 48:1-50:26

Rev. Freddy Fritz

March 25, 2018

Jacob's Death and Burial

Scripture

Today we are concluding a series of sermons that I am calling “Jacob’s Descendants,” based on Genesis 37-50.

Most of the story so far has focused on Joseph, Jacob’s favorite son, who was sold into slavery in Egypt. Joseph experienced adversity and prosperity in Egypt. He eventually became Prime Minister in Egypt as a result of God enabling him to interpret Pharaoh’s dreams about seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. During the second year of the famine, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. After a joyful reunion, he invited his father, his brothers, and all their families to move to Egypt for the duration of the famine. They did so, and the narrative then jumps seventeen years to the conclusion of Jacob’s life in Egypt.

Let’s read about Jacob’s death and burial in Genesis 48:1-50:26. However, for the sake of time, I am going to read Genesis 49:29-50:26. Please keep your Bibles open so that you can follow the entire story in this sermon:

¹ After this, Joseph was told, “Behold, your father is ill.” So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

² And it was told to Jacob, “Your son Joseph has come to you.” Then Israel summoned his strength and sat up in bed.

³ And 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 company of peoples and will give this land to your offspring after you for an everlasting possession.’ ⁵ And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of

Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. ⁶ And the children that you fathered after them shall be yours. They shall be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷ As for me, when I came from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).”

⁸ When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, “Who are these?” ⁹ Joseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom God has given me here.” And he said, “Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them.” ¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. So Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them.

¹¹ And Israel said to Joseph, “I never expected to see your face; and behold, God has let me see your offspring also.”

¹² Then Joseph removed them from his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. ¹³ And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. ¹⁴ And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands (for Manasseh was the firstborn). ¹⁵ And he blessed Joseph and said,

“The God before whom my fathers Abraham
and Isaac walked,
the God who has been my shepherd all my life
long to this day,
¹⁶ the angel who has redeemed me from all evil,
bless the boys;
and in them let my name be carried on,
and the name of my fathers Abraham and
Isaac;
and let them grow into a multitude in the

midst of the earth.”

¹⁷When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, and he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸And Joseph said to his father, “Not this way, my father; since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head.” ¹⁹But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations.” ²⁰So he blessed them that day, saying,

“By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying,
‘God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.’”

Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. ²¹Then Israel said to Joseph, “Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you again to the land of your fathers. ²²Moreover, I have given to you rather than to your brothers one mountain slope that I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow.”

⁴⁹Then Jacob called his sons and said, “Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come.

²“Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob,
listen to Israel your father.

³“Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might, and the firstfruits of my strength,
preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.

⁴Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence,
because you went up to your father's bed;
then you defiled it—he went up to my couch!

- ⁵ “Simeon and Levi are brothers;
 weapons of violence are their swords.
- ⁶ Let my soul come not into their council;
 O my glory, be not joined to their company.
For in their anger they killed men,
 and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen.
- 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.
- ⁸ “Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
 your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
your father’s sons shall bow down before you.
- ⁹ Judah is a lion’s cub;
 from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He stooped down; he crouched as a lion
 and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?
- ¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
 nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;
 and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
- ¹¹ Binding his foal to the vine
 and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine,
he has washed his garments in wine
 and his vesture in the blood of grapes.
- ¹² His eyes are darker than wine,
 and his teeth whiter than milk.
- ¹³ “Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea;
 he shall become a haven for ships,
 and his border shall be at Sidon.
- ¹⁴ “Issachar is a strong donkey,
 crouching between the sheepfolds.
- ¹⁵ He saw that a resting place was good,

Jacob's Descendants

and that the land was pleasant,
so he bowed his shoulder to bear,
and became a servant at forced labor.

¹⁶ “Dan shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁷ Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
a viper by the path,
that bites the horse’s heels
so that his rider falls backward.

¹⁸ I wait for your salvation, O Lord.

¹⁹ “Raiders shall raid Gad,
but he shall raid at their heels.

²⁰ “Asher’s food shall be rich,
and he shall yield royal delicacies.

²¹ “Naphtali is a doe let loose
that bears beautiful fawns.

²² “Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough by a spring;
his branches run over the wall.

²³ The archers bitterly attacked him,
shot at him, and harassed him severely,

²⁴ yet his bow remained unmoved;
his arms were made agile

by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob
(from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),

²⁵ by the God of your father who will help you,
by the Almighty who will bless you
with blessings of heaven above,
blessings of the deep that crouches beneath,
blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

²⁶ The blessings of your father

are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents,
up to the bounties of the everlasting hills.
May they be on the head of Joseph,
and on the brow of him who was set apart
from his brothers.

²⁷ “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf,
in the morning devouring the prey
and at evening dividing the spoil.”

²⁸ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each with the blessing suitable to him. ²⁹ **Then he commanded 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 at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying 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 in it were bought from the Hittites.” ³³ When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.**

50 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 it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

⁴ And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ ‘My father made me swear, saying, “I am about to die: in my tomb that I hewed out for

myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me.” Now therefore, let me please go up and bury my father. Then I will return.”⁶ And Pharaoh answered, “Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear.”⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt,⁸ as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father’s household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen.⁹ And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company.¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days.¹¹ When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians.” Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim; it is beyond the Jordan.¹² Thus his sons did for him 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 at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place.¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

¹⁵ When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.”¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died:¹⁷ ‘Say to Joseph, “Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.”’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him.¹⁸ His brothers also

came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.”¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?”²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.²¹ So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

²² So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father’s house. Joseph lived 110 years.²³ And Joseph saw Ephraim’s children of the third generation. The children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were counted as Joseph’s own.²⁴ And Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.”²⁶ So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. (Genesis 48:1-50:26)

Introduction

In the past two weeks two of our beloved communicant members have passed on to glory and joined the Church Triumphant. Funerals are very important because they draw attention to the end of our earthly journey and focus on what lies beyond this life. It seems fitting, then, that we should come to today’s lesson about Jacob’s death and burial at the end of Genesis.

Most of today’s material is from Sidney Greidanus’ excellent commentary on Genesis that is titled, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*.

Lesson

Jacob's death and burial in Genesis 48:1-50:26 teaches us that because God is sovereign and faithful, his people can die in hope that he will fulfill his promise of land.

Let's use the following outline:

1. The Closing Days of Jacob's Life (48:1-49:32)
2. The Death and Burial of Jacob (49:33-50:14)
3. The Latter Years of Joseph (50:15-21)
4. The Last Deeds and Words of Joseph (50:16-26)

I. The Closing Days of Jacob's Life (48:1-49:32)

First, let's look at the closing days of Jacob's life.

At the end of Genesis 47 we read, "And when the time drew near that Israel [Jacob's covenantal name] must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, '... *Do not bury me in Egypt*, but let me lie with my fathers. *Carry me out of Egypt* and bury me in their burying place'" (Genesis 47:29–30). Joseph agreed to do so.

Now, seventeen years later, Jacob was ill and about to die. Joseph was summoned, and he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to visit their grandfather on his deathbed. With what little strength he had left, Jacob sat up on the edge of his bed and blessed Joseph's two sons, and called them his own.

Then Jacob called his other ten sons and blessed each one of them. Interestingly, the greatest blessing did not go to Reuben, the oldest son, but to Judah, the younger son of Leah. Jacob said, "**The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet**" (49:10a). It is from Judah's line that the great King David will be born, and ultimately the king of Kings, Jesus Christ.

After blessing his sons, Jacob had one final request. Actually, it was more than a request; it was a command. With his last bit of strength Jacob **commanded them and said to them** in Genesis 49:29-32, **“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, in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah—the field and the cave that is in it were bought from the Hittites.”**

Jacob wanted to be buried in the burial plot that Abraham bought when he buried his wife, Sarah. That piece of real estate was just a little piece of the entire land that God had promised repeatedly to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Jacob's final command is really a testimony of his faith in his covenant-keeping God. Although God was taking his time to give the entire Promised Land to Abraham and his descendants, Jacob was absolutely convinced that God would fulfill his promise. He wanted to be part of that future fulfillment, and that is why he wanted to be buried in the Promised Land. As one commentator said, “It is as though the dying Jacob wishes to go ahead and to be on hand in the land when it is fully given.... He wishes to share in the destiny of God's people.”¹

All of Jacob's sons heard his last command. He was to be buried in Canaan and not in Egypt. They all understood the significance: *Not Egypt but Canaan is our home; Canaan is the land God promised to give us!*

¹ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 465.

Do you take God at his word? Do you believe that God is able to fulfill his promises to you? Sometimes you may not see the fulfillment of God's promises, as Jacob did not see the fulfillment of the entire Promised Land. Still, trust in God!

II. The Death and Burial of Jacob (49:33-50:14)

Second, let's examine the death and burial of Jacob.

Genesis 49:33 says, **“When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.”** Joseph was heart-broken at his father's death. He **“fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him”** (50:1). We know nothing about the seventeen years that they had enjoyed together in Egypt. That strong bond was now finally severed by Jacob's death. And Joseph greatly grieved at the death of his father.

But, in order to fulfill Jacob's command, his body had to be embalmed. Verses 2b-3 say, **“So the physicians embalmed Israel. Forty days were required for it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.”** Seventy days is a long time to mourn for someone but, as one commentator says, “Since it was customary in Egypt to mourn the death of a Pharaoh for seventy-two days, Jacob is mourned as a king.”²

But, now that the time of mourning has ended, Joseph had to request permission from Pharaoh to bury his father in Canaan. Being the statesman that he was, Joseph spoke **to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,**

² Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*, 466.

‘My father made me swear, saying, “I am about to die: in my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me.” Now therefore, let me please go up and bury my father. Then I will return’” (50:4-5). Notice how diplomatic Joseph was. He did not mention that Jacob did not want to be buried in Egypt. Those words might offend Pharaoh. He also assured Pharaoh that he would return.

Fortunately, Pharaoh responded positively and **answered, “Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear”** (50:6).

Verses 7-9 describe the great funeral procession: **“So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father’s household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company.”** A large company of Egyptians went with Joseph to bury Jacob.

Even the Canaanites participated in Jacob’s funeral procession. Verses 10-11 read, **“When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, ‘This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians.’ Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim; it is beyond the Jordan.”**

Jacob had become extremely well-known and respected in Egypt and Canaan, as is testified to by the vast funeral congregation.

Verses 12-14 tell about Jacob's burial in the family burial plot in Canaan, **“Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them, for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.”**

Why did Moses go into such great detail describing Jacob's funeral procession? When Abraham died, he simply wrote in Genesis 25:9–10, “Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites.” When Abraham's son Isaac died, the record of his burial was even briefer: “And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him” (35:29). In contrast to these burials, Moses seems to have gone out of his way to emphasize the immense size of Jacob's funeral procession, **“... *all* the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and *all* the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as *all* the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household.... And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a *very great* company”** (50:7-9).

My Old Testament professor, John Sailhamer, suggests that “the writer's concern focuses on God's faithfulness to his promise of the land and the hope of God's people in the eventual return to the land. In the later prophetic literature, a recurring image of the fulfillment of the promise to return to the land pictures Israel returning to the land accompanied by many from among the nations. The prophets of Israel saw the return as a time when ‘all the nations will stream to Jerusalem’...

(Isaiah 2:2–3)... Jacob, in his final return to the Land of Promise, was accompanied by a great congregation of the officials and elders of the land of Egypt. With him was also the mighty army of the Egyptians. Thus the story of Jacob's burial in the land foreshadows the time when God 'will bring Jacob back from captivity and will have compassion on all the people of Israel' (Ezekiel 39:25)."³

Jesus takes this image one step further. When Jesus heard the centurion's confession of Jesus' power to heal, he was amazed. This Gentile centurion said to Jesus, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word [from a distance], and my servant will be healed." When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, *many will come from east and west* and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 8:8–11). Jacob's large funeral procession consisting of Israelites, Egyptians, and Canaanites foreshadows the last day when Jesus will return on the clouds of heaven. Then "many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." God will at last completely fulfill his promise of land—a peaceful home for his people, a new earth, where God "will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:3-4). People from all nations will eat with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the children of Israel

³ Quoted in Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*, 468.

in the kingdom of God (Revelation 7:4-9).

III. The Latter Years of Joseph (50:15-21)

Third, let's notice the latter years of Joseph.

Jacob's sons were more concerned with the immediate than with the eternal. They were concerned that with their father now dead that Joseph might exact revenge upon them for what they did to him decades earlier. So, **they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you." And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father" (50:16-17).**

Interestingly, Joseph's **brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants" (50:18).** Seventeen years earlier they had bowed before Joseph, as Joseph had foretold in his dream, but they did not know then that they were bowing down to Joseph. Now, however, they again bowed down to Joseph, this time knowing who he was.

Verses 19-21 give Joseph's tender reply to his brothers, **"Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones."** Twice Joseph urged them not to be afraid, to have no fear. He based this assurance on God's providence, saying, **"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today."** Commentator Sidney Greidanus notes, "In his providence, God used their evil intentions to

save numerous people: the Egyptians, the Israelites, and others. God is sovereign. Though he gives human beings freedom to act, God is in ultimate control of the outcome. And God's plan is good. Because God is sovereign and faithful to his plan, Israel can entrust herself to his good care."⁴

IV. The Last Deeds and Words of Joseph (50:22-26)

Finally, let's look at the last deeds and words of Joseph.

Verse 22 says, **"So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's house. Joseph lived 110 years."** Joseph lived another fifty-four years after the death of Jacob. God blessed him, and he was able to see his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Finally, **Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob"** (50:24). This was the first time that Joseph spoke about the Promised Land, and since they were his last words, they are significant. He was so sure that God would come and take the family of Jacob back to the Promised Land that he **made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here"** (50:25). Hebrews 11:22 states, "By *faith* Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones." Joseph did not see the exodus. Joseph did not see the Promised Land again. But Joseph firmly believed that it would happen someday. And he wanted to be part of God's great deliverance.

⁴ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*, 470.

The final verse in Genesis says, **“So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt”** (50:26). Greidanus says, “The story of Genesis that began with God creating a beautiful Paradise on earth for his creatures ends with Joseph in a coffin in Egypt—waiting, waiting for God to bring his people back to the Promised Land.”⁵

Joseph would have to wait a long time—more than four hundred years, in fact. Nevertheless, God was true to his promise, and eventually the people of God left the land of Egypt and returned to the Promised Land. Exodus 13:19 says that “Moses took the bones of Joseph with him” when the people of God made an exodus out of Egypt. The book of Joshua records that “as for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money” (Joshua 24:32). Joseph was also buried in the Promised Land. He is also waiting for God to completely fulfill his promise of land. “For,” as Greidanus says, “ultimately, according to the Bible, God’s promise of land means the return of Paradise on earth (Genesis 2; Revelation 22:1–5).”⁶

Conclusion

Therefore, having analyzed Jacob’s death and burial in Genesis 48:1-50:26, let us be assured that God is sovereign and faithful and can be trusted to fulfill his promise of land.

⁵ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*, 471.

⁶ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*, 472.

When Jesus hung on the cross, one of the criminals crucified with him begged him, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:42–43). Jesus died and rose again to restore us to Paradise. Jesus said to his disciples, “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?” (John 14:2). At the Last Supper, Jesus said, “I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom” (Matthew 26:29).

Today, we are like Jacob, Joseph, and the Israelites—waiting for God to come to us and fulfill his promise of land—to restore Paradise on earth. Sometimes we get so caught up in all that is going on around us, and we forget that we have a glorious future hope—a hope of a new earth where “death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore” (Revelation 21:4).

Let us be assured that God is sovereign and faithful and can be trusted to fulfill his promise of land. Our ascended Lord Jesus Christ himself promises those who have repented of their sin and trusted in him, “To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7). Amen.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ
and membership in his church family,
develop them to Christlike maturity,
equip them for their ministry in the church
and life mission in the world,
in order to magnify God's name.*

Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

This sermon, and other sermons, by the Rev. Freddy Fritz can be found at:

1. www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons.
2. www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp.
3. www.sermonaudio.com/source_detail.asp?sourceid=FreddyFritz.

Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church (PCA)

Answers for Life!

Address: 19911 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa, FL 33647

Telephone: (813) 973-2484

Fax: (813) 973-4673

Email: Office@TampaBayPresbyterian.org

Web site: www.TampaBayPresbyterian.org