**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | The Blessing in a Box of Bones |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Hebrews 11:22; Genesis 50:22-26 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2398 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Joseph was a champion of faith.
      1. He lived as a great man.
      2. He died as a great man.
   2. The delineation of Joseph’s life of faith is found in the book of Hebrews.
      1. Hebrews 11:22
         1. Joseph was dying.
         2. He was the Prime Minister of Egypt with incredible wealth and power.
         3. He gave instructions concerning his bones.
   3. Man is the only creature who knows that he is going to die.
      1. And he is trying desperately to forget it.
   4. There is a fear of death.
      1. The Bible teaches that the devil keeps people in bondage through the fear of death.
         1. Hebrews 2:14-15
      2. Anyone who is afraid of death is in bondage.
      3. If we are afraid of death, then we have failed to understand what Jesus Christ has done for us.
   5. No one is ready to live until he is no longer afraid to die.
   6. Jesus came to deliver us from the fear and bondage of death.
      1. As Christians, we can look forward to going to Heaven.
   7. The message today is about one incident in the life of Joseph, a champion of faith.
      1. Hebrews 11:22
      2. Joseph gave a commandment to the children of Israel concerning his bones.
         1. God was going to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt.
         2. The bones of Joseph would be placed in a box to be taken with them.
            1. There is a great blessing in this box of bones.

It will teach us how to live confidently.

It will teach us how to die expectantly and to no longer fear death.

1. faith remembers the unbreakable promises of god (genesis 50:22-26)
   1. Hebrews 11:22
      1. Joseph had said that God was going to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt.
   2. Genesis 50:22-26
      1. The key to this passage is verse 24.
      2. The Israelites were in Egypt by the protective hand of God, but God was going to bring them out of Egypt and into the land of Canaan.
         1. Joseph knew this and was confident of this because God had made a promise.
   3. Genesis 15:13-14
      1. It is approximately 300 years prior to the time of Joseph when God is speaking to Abraham in this passage.
      2. This Scripture is a clear promise of God.
         1. Abraham was going to have descendants.
         2. Those descendants were going to go into a strange land and would stay there for 400 years.
         3. They would be afflicted.
         4. But after 400 years, God would bring them out, and they would have great wealth.
            1. This is why, after 300 years, Joseph was able to say to his brothers that they were going to leave that place and to take his bones with them when they go.
   4. The root of Joseph’s faith was the promise he had from Almighty God.
      1. Joseph had saturated his heart, mind, soul and will in the Word of God.
   5. Romans 10:17
      1. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.
   6. What is faith?
      1. Faith is not positive thinking.
      2. Faith is not following a hunch.
      3. Faith is not hoping for the best.
      4. Faith is not a feeling of optimism.
      5. Faith is not self-confidence.
      6. Faith is not wishing on a star.
      7. Faith is not crossing your fingers.
      8. Faith is getting a promise from the Word of God.
   7. Hebrews 11:1
      1. The word “hope” here does not mean a fond desire; it means a glorious assurance based on the Word of God.
   8. The word “hope” in the Bible does not mean the same thing as when we use the word “hope” today.
      1. When a young girl wants to get married, she puts some nice things in a chest and calls it a “hope” chest.
         1. She hopes one day that she will get married.
         2. This is not what the word “hope” means in the Bible.
      2. The Second Coming of Jesus is called “the blessed hope.”
         1. Titus 2:13
         2. We know that Jesus is coming again because we have God’s promise.
            1. John 14:3
      3. The Bible calls hope the “anchor of the soul.”
         1. Hebrews 6:19
   9. Our faith will not exceed our love, knowledge nor our understanding of the Word of God.
   10. Faith is the by-product of hearing from God.
       1. We cannot have faith by merely guessing at the will of God.
       2. We cannot have faith by just following a hunch.
       3. We said, “God said it,” and believe.
   11. Joseph told the Israelites that they were surely coming out of Egypt because his faith was resting in the unbreakable promises of God.
2. faith relies on the unshakeable power of god (genesis 50:24)
   1. We can have faith because God says that He can do it and will do it, and we know that God is able to do it.
   2. Genesis 50:24
      1. Joseph believed in the unshakeable power of God.
   3. Contrary to human evidence, Joseph had faith.
      1. At the time Joseph stated that they were going to leave Egypt, there was no reason for the Israelites to leave.
         1. They had already left Canaan because of a famine.
         2. They were in a place of favor.
         3. They were in comfortable circumstances.
      2. Outwardly, there was no reason why they should leave.
         1. If the Israelites had been like many modern-day Christians, they might have re-examined the promises in the light of present-day circumstances.
            1. There are those today who take the promises of God and parade them past the judgment bar of human reason.
         2. But the unshakeable power of God overcomes circumstances.
   4. Joseph’s faith was not shaken by fickle emotions.
      1. Joseph’s emotions did not have anything to do with God’s promise.
      2. Feelings come and go and are deceptive.
      3. Do not base your faith on how you feel about the situation.
   5. Romans 1:17
   6. We need to get out of the realm of emotion and get our faith in the unbreakable promises of God and in the unshakeable power of God.
   7. John 5:24
   8. If you have never met the devil, it is because you and the devil have been going in the same direction.
      1. If you turn around, you will have a head-on collision.
   9. When the devil gets on your case, get the Word of God.
      1. Instead of you arguing with the devil, make him argue with God.
         1. Make him argue with the unbreakable promises of God.
   10. Joseph’s faith was not stampeded by circumstances, challenged by his emotions nor eroded by long delay.
       1. Three hundred years had passed since God had made that promise, and more time was yet to come.
       2. Joseph said, “Take my bones with you.”
          1. He did not say, “Take my body with you.”
          2. Joseph knew that his body would be turned to dust and that the only thing left would be a box of bones.
       3. Joseph knew that time must pass.
          1. Exodus 1:8
          2. Yet, Joseph was standing on the Word of God.
          3. Don’t let seeming delay keep you from believing the Word of God.
          4. Centuries cannot erode away the promises of God.
   11. Habakkuk 2:3
       1. God has an appointed time.
   12. Another illustration of how God fulfills His promises through time is found in the book of Ezekiel.
       1. Tyre was an ancient, wicked city on the seacoast of the Mediterranean.
       2. The lifestyles of the people of Tyre were an affront to the ways of God.
       3. God prophesied, through the prophet Ezekiel, that He would destroy Tyre.
          1. Ezekiel 26:3
          2. Ezekiel 26:12-14
             1. When God gave this promise, Tyre was one of the mightiest city-states on Earth.
       4. The years passed, and in 550 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian, came and made siege of ancient Tyre and decimated it.
          1. Knowing that Nebuchadnezzar was coming, the people of Tyre slipped out of the city-state and made their way to an island where they felt safe.
          2. Though Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city, he left the walls, houses and timber.
             1. But God had said that the stones, the walls, the timbers, and even the dust would be cast into the sea.
       5. In 215 B.C., over three hundred years later, Alexander the Great came through the land, marching in conquest.
          1. He asked the people of Tyre to help him, because they had a great navy now that they were an island city-state.
       6. His armies took the walls, the timbers and those ruins and built a causeway out to the island inhabited by the people of Tyre.
          1. Not a stone and not a timber were left of the former place.
          2. It was all thrown into the sea to build the causeway so that Alexander the Great could march his armies against Tyre.
       7. The promises of God are not eroded away by time, emotion or circumstances.
   13. When God says something, He is going to do it.
   14. Some may wonder if Jesus is coming again.
       1. Some may say that it has been a long time.
          1. The Bible prophesies that there would be people like this.
             1. 2 Peter 3:4
          2. 2 Peter 3:8
             1. God is not concerned with time.
       2. God will do what He says He will do.
   15. Joseph said, “God will surely bring you out.”
       1. Joseph had the promise.
       2. Joseph knew the power.
3. faith results in the unmistakeable peace of god (Genesis 50:24)
   1. Genesis 50:24
   2. Joseph was a man dying in peace.
      1. Joseph’s grandchildren and great grandchildren were brought to him, and they sat upon his knees.
      2. There was not a hint of panic.
      3. He was stepping into Glory in perfect peace.
   3. Joseph said, “Take my bones with you.”
      1. Exodus 13:18-19
      2. Joshua 24:32
      3. Just as Joseph had believed and prophesied, Moses carried his bones across the sands of the Sinai.
      4. Then, Joshua carried Joseph’s bones across Jordan and into Canaan.
   4. Why all this fuss about Joseph’s bones? What difference did it make to Joseph?
      1. Joseph could have built himself a monument in Egypt.
      2. Joseph could have had himself embalmed and enshrined with great glory, pomp and circumstance.
         1. He had the power to do it.
         2. He had the wealth to do it.
      3. But Joseph wanted to be a part of what God was doing.
         1. He knew that success, wealth, power and everything else this world has to offer is temporary.
         2. That is why God could trust him with such wealth and power.
      4. Joseph did not want a monument to pride but a monument of faith.
         1. He believed God.
         2. He was identifying with what God was doing.
   5. Joseph knew that when he died and they put his bones in a coffin that God was not finished with those bones.
      1. Daniel 12:2
      2. John 5:28-29
   6. Everyone is going to be raised from the dead.
      1. Don’t get the idea that only Christians are going to be raised from the dead.
         1. Both the saved and the lost are going to be raised.
   7. There is coming a resurrection.
      1. The prophet Daniel said that it would happen.
      2. The Lord Jesus said that it would happen.
      3. You will one day rise from the dead, either to be swept into the arms of the Lord Jesus Christ or to meet in the judgment a God you do not know.
         1. Are you ready for that resurrection?
   8. We, too, are going to have an exodus.
      1. Philippians 3:20-21
         1. For Christians, our vile bodies will be transformed into the likeness of the Lord Jesus.
         2. We are looking for Jesus; our citizenship is in Heaven.
      2. 1 Corinthians 15:54-58
         1. “Corruptible” in this passage means “that which decays.”
         2. “Mortal” in this passage means “that which dies.”
   9. We don’t know how much Joseph knew about the resurrection; but we know that he, by faith, gave commandment concerning his bones.
4. CONCLUSION
   1. Death is a fact.
      1. We do not know how or when we will die, but, “*It is appointed unto man once to die*.”
         1. Hebrews 9:27
   2. Through His resurrection, the Lord Jesus pulled the sting out of death.
      1. Because He lives, we live with Him.
      2. We no longer fear death because we have a loving Savior.
   3. Don’t you want to receive the Lord Jesus into your life today?
      1. John 1:12
   4. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   5. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16