



It is important for you and me to know the story of the Bible, that makes known who God is and what it means to be in covenant relationship with him.

Before we move on into Genesis 42, there are three theological emphases to be integrated into our lives.

Three Theological Emphases

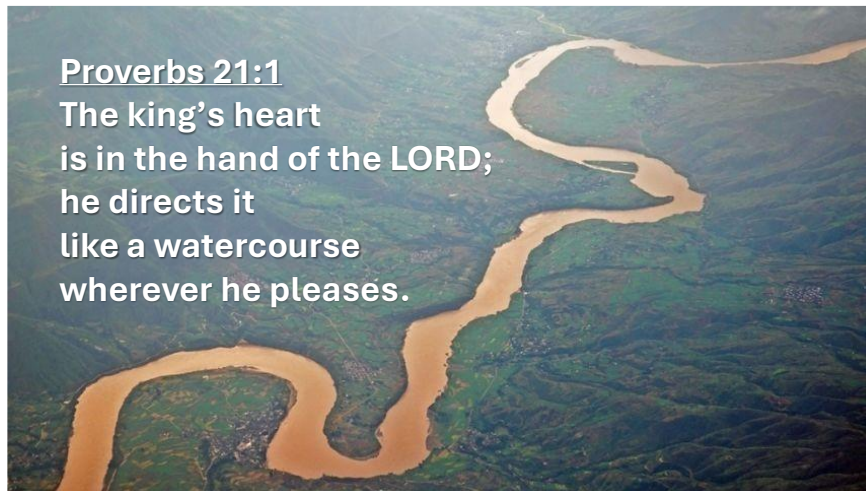
- 1. God determines the course of history, and he utilizes human leadership in bringing his will to fulfillment.**

Joseph had been strategically placed by God in Egypt. But so had the man who held the title, Pharaoh.

Though Pharaoh was not in relationship with God, God nonetheless had prepared Pharaoh... in his upbringing and training, so that his heart was willing... to share power with Joseph... in order that many Egyptian lives might be saved.

Do you realize how extraordinary that was?
That is not the typical way a ruler or king exercises leadership.

God reveals in Genesis 41 that he is sovereign over kings, rulers and leaders... and brings about through them the fulfilling of his will.
How does God do this?



Proverbs 21:1
The king's heart
is in the hand of the LORD;
he directs it
like a watercourse
wherever he pleases.

We believe God directs the circumstances of his people's lives – that everything that touches our lives first passes through his hands.

But God also directs the heart of a king, or a ruler, or a leader. He influences their thoughts and emotions and persuades them to act, or not to act.

God does whatever he pleases for the realizing of his good will. If God was not good, this would be terrifying. But because he is good, this gives great confidence to his people.

Consider this example.

One hundred years... before he was born... God said this about a man named Cyrus... who after the fall of Babylon... became the king of Persia...

Isaiah 44:28; 45:1

“[Cyrus] is my shepherd
and will accomplish all that I please...

[He is my] anointed,
whose right hand I take hold of...”

Isaiah 45:4-7

“For the sake of Jacob my servant,
of Israel my chosen,
I summon you by name
and bestow on you a title of honor,
though you do not acknowledge me,
so that from the rising of the sun
men may know
there is none besides me.”

Isaiah 45:4-7

I am the LORD,
and there is no other.
I form the light
and create darkness,
I bring prosperity
and create disaster;
I, the LORD, do all these things.”

The book of Ezra, 1:1, says that when Cyrus assumed the throne of Persia... God moved his heart to make a proclamation... to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem that had been destroyed by the Babylonians, and to send back, with provisions, Jewish exiles who were willing, to carry out this work.

This was an extraordinary proclamation..

It was unheard of... that a king of such power and influence... would not only desire, but command that the temple of the Hebrew people's God... be rebuilt!

But this is God's world, and again, I say... he does as he pleases... The LORD used King Cyrus for great good... as he did Pharaoh in the days of Joseph.

Bruce Waltke writes,

**“The fact that God determines
the course of history,
and that he hastens
to bring his will to pass,
is precisely the reason why
biblical leaders take appropriate measures
to keep in step with God.”**

Bruce Waltke. p.536.

We, who follow Jesus... who have had a new nature created in us by the power of God's Spirit – a servant leader nature... that is like that of Jesus... are both humbled and left in awe... that God uses the church of Jesus to carry out his will here on the earth!

God could advance his mission of rescue without us.

But he chooses to involve us.

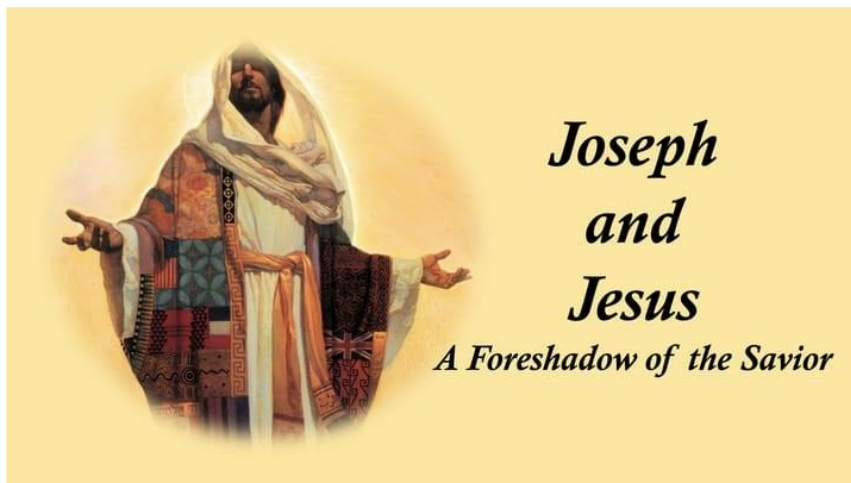
This is a great privilege!

Three Theological Emphases

1. **God determines the course of history, and he utilizes human leadership in bringing his will to fulfillment.**
2. **Joseph foreshadowed Jesus**

The story of the OT is the story of God at work in human history to bring to fulfillment his promise that he would send a Rescuer into the world... to reverse what sin and death had ruined... when our first parents turned from God... and were imprinted with the nature of the serpent, the angel who had rebelled against God.

The OT repeatedly and gloriously pointed ahead... to who that Rescuer would be... and what he would do when he came. The lives of many OT people, including Joseph, foreshadowed Jesus Christ.



Let me show you.

Joseph's cloak was stripped off of him, when his brothers seized him... as were the clothes of Jesus stripped off of him, when he was turned over to the Romans.

The brothers of Joseph sold him into slavery for twenty pieces of silver... and Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

Joseph was a slave in Egypt.

Jesus was born in a land occupied by Rome.

Joseph resisted and overcame the temptation presented by Mrs. Potiphar... as did Jesus, resist and overcome the temptation presented to him by Satan in the desert over 40 days.

Joseph was punished for sin he did not commit... and Jesus on the cross was crushed for our sin.

First as a slave and then in prison Joseph was abandoned and forgotten... and from the cross Jesus cried out, "Why have you forsaken me?"

Joseph was raised out of prison and exalted to a position of power and glory, becoming the ruler of Egypt... as was Jesus raised by God from the prison of Sheol and exalted to his Father's right hand, as the Ruler of heaven and earth, holding all power and authority.

Joseph, demonstrated God's wisdom and amazed Pharaoh and his officials... as did Jesus whose wisdom and teaching amazed people, even as it confounded the religious and political leaders of his day.

As the great-grandson of Abraham, Joseph blessed the nations of the earth with salvation from famine... as did Jesus Christ, a descendant of Abraham, bring blessing to all nations through the salvation he provided through his death and resurrection.

Joseph opened the granaries of Egypt during the years of famine and provided food for the hungry who came to him... as did Jesus provide living bread to all who came to him.

When Joseph's family came to Egypt, he settled them in Goshen, the best land of Egypt... as will Jesus settle his brothers and sisters, the adopted sons and daughters of his Father, in the new creation, a land of abundant goodness.



.. than Joseph...

... because Jesus alone is the power and the wisdom of God, 1 Corinthians 1:24.

Three Theological Emphases

1. **God determines the course of history, and he utilizes human leadership in bringing his will to fulfillment.**
2. **Joseph foreshadowed Jesus**
3. **In Egypt, but not a part of Egypt.**

Joseph was given an Egyptian name.
Joseph spoke the language of Egypt.
Joseph wore the clothing of Egypt.
Joseph ate Egyptian food.
Joseph sang the songs of Egypt.
Joseph learned the history of Egypt.
Joseph lived in an Egyptian home.
Joseph was given an Egyptian wife.

Though he adapted himself in many ways to the Egyptian culture in which he lived, Joseph never violated his covenant relationship with God.

How do we know this?

First of all, because of the names he gave to his two sons.

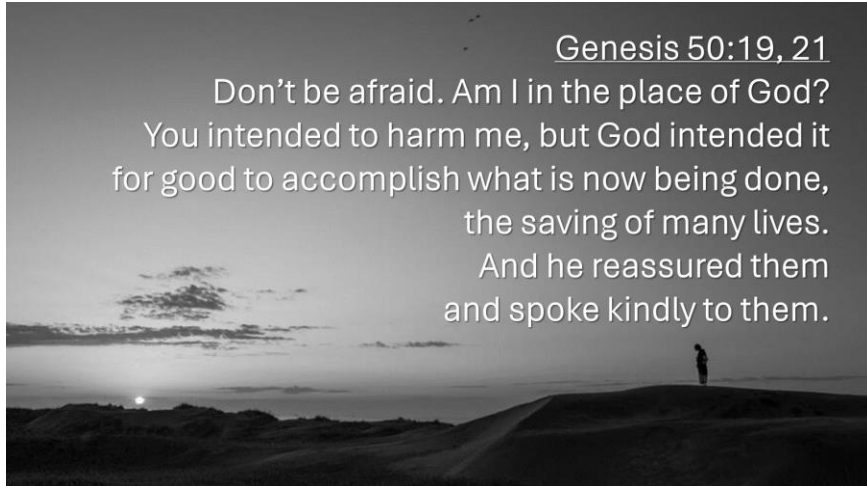


Manasseh and Ephraim

They were a testimony to the faithfulness of his God whom he loved and trusted and served – Manasseh, God has made me forget; Ephraim - God has made me fruitful.

Second of all because of how Joseph reconciled with his brothers instead of taking revenge upon them.

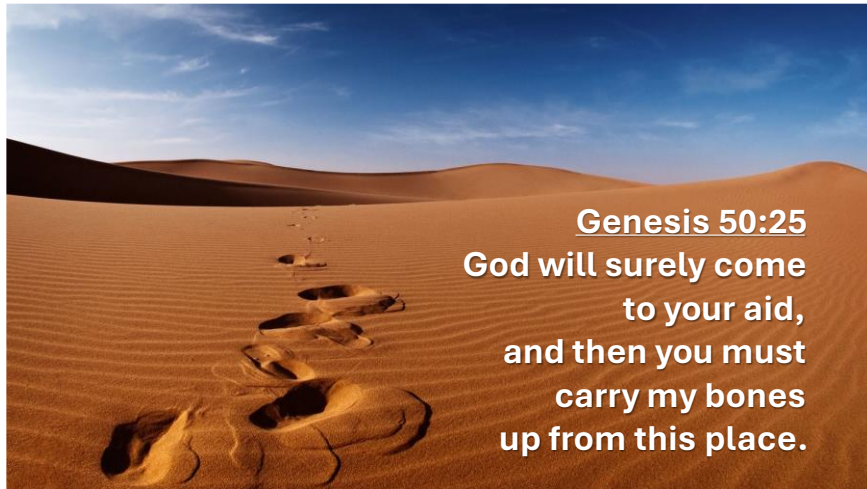
Years later, when his father died and his brothers worried, Joseph would now take revenge, he assured them...



Genesis 50:19, 21

Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God?
You intended to harm me, but God intended it
for good to accomplish what is now being done,
the saving of many lives.
And he reassured them
and spoke kindly to them.

Thirdly we know this because of the testimony he gave before he died...



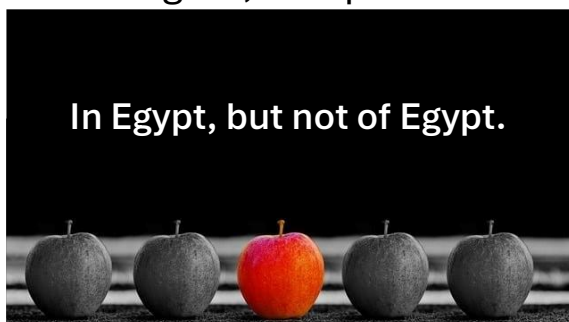
Genesis 50:25

God will surely come
to your aid,
and then you must
carry my bones
up from this place.

Joseph knew his future was in the land which God had promised to his great-grandfather Abraham... the land of Canaan.

Though Joseph was at the very center of Egyptian life, it was not Egypt, but God who was at the center of his life.

In this regard, Joseph was...



In Egypt, but not of Egypt.

The followers of God in every generation... are not of the world. This is why Jesus gave this teaching the last night of his life... a teaching that is both applicable to his disciple then and to us now...

If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

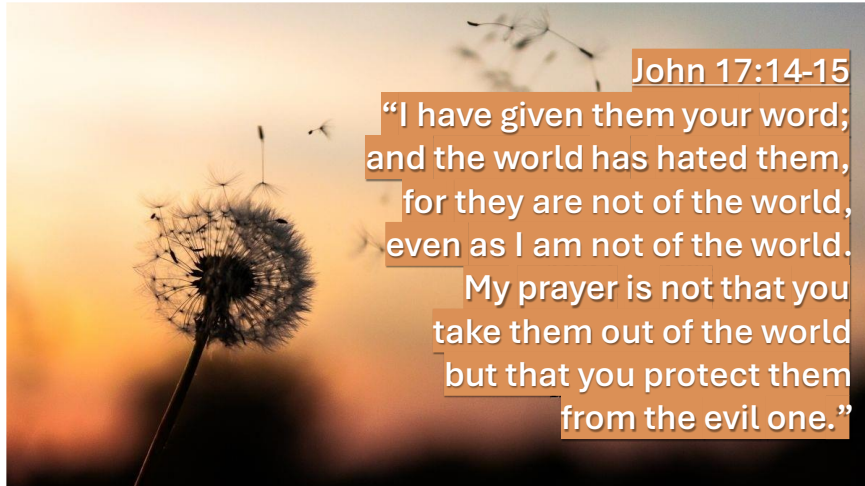
John 15:19 NIV

The reason you and I don't feel at home in this world, is because our home is in God.

Throughout our days on this earth, we are strangers and exiles. But we live with anticipation of the day, when we will be...



On that very same night, after he told his disciples that they would experience trouble in this world, Jesus prayed this prayer of protection over them....



John 17:14-15

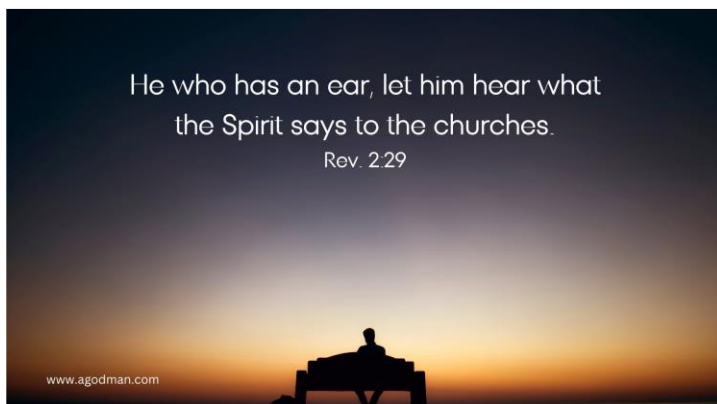
“I have given them your word;
and the world has hated them,
for they are not of the world,
even as I am not of the world.
My prayer is not that you
take them out of the world
but that you protect them
from the evil one.”

By design, our God leaves his adopted children on the earth to live as foreigners, endeavoring, as they do so, to shower grace upon people and to bless this world in the name of Jesus.

This is why we expend energy and effort and resources, as did Joseph, to save lives and to make this world a better place, all for the fame and glory of our great God.

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He who has an ear, let him hear what
the Spirit says to the churches.

Rev. 2:29

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