

Genesis 47:7-31 to 50:1-26

Genesis 46:28 **"And he (that is Jacob) sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen."**

They were shepherds, a despised group in Egypt, so neither was it practical or desirable for them to live among the Egyptians.

No, they must dwell in Goshen, not only to protect their business, but to protect their identity, and Joseph was in an ideal position to make it happen.

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Well, the first meeting with Pharaoh went very well.

His brothers stated their case clearly and honestly, and Pharaoh made it official. They would live in the land of Goshen. So having passed this major hurdle, Joseph arranged another meeting for his father, probably as a formality, but as it turned out, it was anything but.

Genesis 47:7 **"And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh."**

Everyone must have been shocked!

Not only had he failed to bow to this great ruler, but he raised his hand in blessing.

I'm sure it was kindly meant, but it was rather a bold statement.

Everyone, from the highest court official to the guard standing at the door, knew

that " **without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.**"

Fortunately, Pharaoh didn't take offence, but there still wasn't a lot of common ground to build a meaningful conversation on.

Sensing the difficulty, and noticing Jacob's great age, Pharaoh asked, "**How old art thou?**"

Now, some people would have taken this opportunity to boast about their wisdom and accomplishments they had achieved over the years.

Yes, Jacob could have told him about his business ability.

Even as a young man, he had accumulated tremendous flocks and herds at the expense of his uncle.

And not only was there the temporal to be considered, there was also the spiritual.

His family had been chosen by the God of all the earth.

And He had appeared personally to his grandfather, his father, and himself.

Why, just last week, before he crossed the line into Egypt, God had spoken to him personally in a dream.

But the old patriarch wasn't trying to impress. In fact, he was surprisingly candid.

V 9-10 **"And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my**

**fathers in the days of their
pilgrimage.**

**10: And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went
out from before Pharaoh."**

It was a good thing that Pharaoh was a
patient man.

He had graciously accepted Jacob's blessing,
and had made an admirable attempt to
strike up a conversation, but the
result had been rather negative.

All of Jacob's forefathers had outlived him,
and he had seen a lot of trouble in his
life.

No, Jacob certainly wasn't trying to
impress, but he was a little hasty in
his conclusions.

After all, he wasn't dead yet.

Actually, he lived another 17 years, and
passed away at the grand old age of

147, which admittedly wasn't as old as his forefathers.

His grandfather had lived for 175 years, and his father had passed away at 180.

So all along, we see the gradual decrease in longevity after the flood.

It was a normal part of God's plan.

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But Jacob wasn't complaining. He was simply being very truthful.

And like his sons and his fathers before him, he did take the place of a pilgrim--"**The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years.**"

This is consistent with Hebrews 11:13 that says, "**These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were**

**persuaded of them, and embraced them,
and confessed that they were strangers
and pilgrims on the earth."**

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And so that was about it.

As far as we know from scripture, the
interview ended right there.

Jacob blessed Pharaoh once again, leaving
the poor man shaking his head just a
little, and reflecting on this most
unusual person.

Yes, it had been a short interview, but it
certainly was a refreshing change from
the usual hypocrisy he encountered on a
daily basis.

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V 11-12 **"And Joseph placed his father and
his brethren, and gave them a
possession in the land of Egypt, in the**

best of the land, in the land of
Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

**12: And Joseph nourished his father,
and his brethren, and all his father's
household, with bread, according to
their families."**

Goshen, as we noted in last week's lesson,
had some very definite advantages.

It accommodated their nomadic life, and
separated them geographically from
worldly Egypt, while at the same time,
Joseph supplied all of their needs
without charge.

The name *Goshen* means "to draw near," and it
describes Joseph's close association
with his brethren, and pictures
Christ's care for His church in this
Age of Grace.

Later it was called Rameses, which I'm told means "the thunder that destroys."

No doubt this describes Christ's reign during the millennium when He will rule with a rod of iron, and Israel will have a privileged place in His Kingdom.

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And so it was with Joseph.

As he tenderly cared for his family in Goshen, he would deal with the rest of Egypt quite differently.

V 13-17 **"And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.**

14: And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for

the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15: And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

16: And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

17: And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year."

There was no grace here, but there was fairness.

First of all, He insisted that they *purchase* the corn, no doubt at a reasonable price, and when their money ran out, he used the barter system to exchange their cattle for food.

Under the circumstances, they couldn't feed them anyhow, so no doubt they would have ended up in the soup pot.

And when all their livestock was gone but the famine still remained, the people came to Joseph with a proposal of their own.

V 18-19 **"When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is**

not ought left in the sight of my lord,
but our bodies, and our lands:

19: Wherefore shall we die before thine
eyes, both we and our land? buy us and
our land for bread, and we and our land
will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give
us seed, that we may live, and not die,
that the land be not desolate."

They would lose their freedom, but it was a
lot better than starvation.

V 20-22 "And Joseph bought all the land of
Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians
sold every man his field, because the
famine prevailed over them: so the land
became Pharaoh's.

21: And as for the people, he removed
them to cities from one end of the
borders of Egypt even to the other end
thereof.

22: Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands."

The entire land of Egypt was now living on welfare, and Joseph moved the people into the cities to be closer to the source of supply.

However, as soon as the famine was over, he sent them back to their farms with enough seed corn to make a fresh start.

V 23-26 **"Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.**

24: And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall

be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25: And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26: And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's."

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During those years of famine, Joseph wasn't simply collecting wealth.

No, he was changing the very structure of the nation.

Up to this time, Egypt had operated under the feudal system.

Pharaoh was king over many lesser land barons.

Each of these barons had his own serfs to till his land, and even maintained a small army for his protection.

Certainly Pharaoh was the supreme ruler, but he presided over a weak and fragmented dominion.

During the famine, all that changed.

Because their money had failed, there were no more rich and poor, and no more little kings.

Everyone was treated equally, and everyone received what he needed.

In one master stroke, Joseph had broken the power of the land barons, and set up

Pharaoh as the supreme ruler over a
united realm.

And it was a sustainable system.

He could maintain this new centralized
administration with the 20% tax he
collected from the people.

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Back when Joseph had revealed himself to his
brethren, he told them that God had
made him "**a father to Pharaoh,**" and He
certainly had.

Through his wise administration and just 20%
of the seven years' bounty, Joseph had
given Pharaoh a *new Egypt* on a silver
platter.

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We all know the advantages and disadvantages
of a democracy, and certainly in this
world of evil men, it is the best way.

However, if you have a man of integrity at the top, and Pharaoh certainly seemed to be that, a strong monarchy is a much better system than the one Egypt had before.

Granted, it didn't work for ever.

Under a Pharaoh that **"knew not Joseph,"** that system was the ruination of their country.

However, at that particular time, it was a vast improvement.

And the real significance of Joseph's influence on Egypt (a type of the world) is the fact that his administration closely portrays Christ's rule over His millennial kingdom.

Joseph had presided over a country in desperation, and out of a national

catastrophe, he had forged a strong nation.

At His second coming, Christ will take control of an exhausted and bankrupt earth and turn it all around.

Earthquakes, wars, famines, pestilence, and natural disasters of global magnitude will have bereft the world of its resources.

The persecutions of the beast will have decimated the world's population.

So drastic conditions will call for drastic measures.

From His headquarters in Jerusalem, Christ will rule the world with a rod of iron, while at the same time protecting the nation of Israel.

And it will be a rule in righteousness.

There will be no more tyrants and enslaved,
but as Micah 4:4 prophesies, "----**they
shall sit every man under his vine and
under his fig tree; and none shall make
them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD
of hosts hath spoken it.**"

Until that time, certainly a democracy is
the best answer, but when the Son of
God takes the helm, a theocracy will be
perfect.

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V 27 **"And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt,
in the country of Goshen; and they had
possessions therein, and grew, and
multiplied exceedingly.**

**28: And Jacob lived in the land of
Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age
of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven
years."**

Here we have the real beginnings of the nation of Israel.

And they were good years for Jacob also.

As the father of the Governor, he enjoyed 17 years of honour and comfort in Egypt, but it was never his home.

Jacob's heart was still in Canaan, and that's where he wanted to be buried.

When God had promised him, **"I will go down with thee into Egypt,"** He had also said **"and I will also surely bring thee up again."**

He could live in Egypt, but he must be buried in the Promised Land.

V 29-31 **"And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal**

kindly and truly with me; bury me not,
I pray thee, in Egypt:

30: But I will lie with my fathers, and
thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and
bury me in their buryingplace. And he
said, I will do as thou hast said.

31: And he said, Swear unto me. And he
sware unto him. And Israel bowed
himself upon the bed's head."

In those closing days, Jacob must have often
thought about the Lord's words---"**and
Joseph shall put his hand upon thine
eyes.**"

Yes, Joseph would be there to close his eyes
in death, and to assure him that he
would be buried in Canaan.

Genesis 48:1-2 **"And it came to pass after
these things, that one told Joseph,
Behold, thy father is sick: and he took**

with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

2: And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed."

Of course Israel *would* strengthen himself when he knew Joseph was coming, but there was something else.

He must attend to some very important business before he left.

Of late, he had been thinking a great deal about the dispensation of his assets.

If things had turned out as he had planned, Rachel would had been his only wife, and Joseph would have been the firstborn.

It was Laban's deception, not Jacob's choice, which had been responsible for the way things had turned out.

And by his actions, it was Joseph, not Reuben, who had shown the strength of character befitting a firstborn son.

Yes, it would be only appropriate that Joseph receive the double portion.

Of course, Joseph didn't need his material possessions.

He didn't need a double portion of Jacob's herds and riches, but there was something he *would* value very highly.

Jacob would give him a double portion of the Promised Land.

And to accomplish that, he would adopt Joseph's two sons into his family.

V 3-6 **"And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the**

land of Canaan, and blessed me,
4: And said unto me, Behold, I will
make thee fruitful, and multiply thee,
and I will make of thee a multitude of
people; and will give this land to thy
seed after thee for an everlasting
possession.

5: And now thy two sons, Ephraim and
Manasseh, which were born unto thee in
the land of Egypt before I came unto
thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben
and Simeon, they shall be mine.

6: And thy issue, which thou begettest
after them, shall be thine, and shall
be called after the name of their
brethren in their inheritance."

Ephraim and Manasseh "are mine; as Reuben
and Simeon, they shall be mine."

They would stand on an equal footing with his own sons, being the heads of two tribes in Israel.

V 7 **"And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem."**

It seemed like only yesterday when Jacob had buried his one true love.

Had not circumstances overcome him, Rachel would have been the mother of all of his children, and Joseph would have been his firstborn.

And that's the way it was going to be!

Joseph would receive a double portion in the Promised Land, his last tribute to a memory that would not die.

But there was another firstborn to be chosen, and another firstborn to be bypassed.

V 8-20 "And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these?

9: And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.

10: Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them.

11: And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed.

12: And Joseph brought them out from between 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 unto him.

14: And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

15: And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

16: The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of

my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

17: And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

18: And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

19: And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

**20: And he blessed them that day,
saying, In thee shall Israel bless,
saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as
Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before
Manasseh."**

Knowing his father's poor eyesight, it was natural for Joseph to correct him, but Jacob knew exactly what he was doing.

Although he was almost blind, his spiritual eyesight was 20/20.

Looking far into the future, he could see clearly that God's chief blessing would fall upon Ephraim.

"---but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he."

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Genesis 49:1-2 **"And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that**

which shall befall you in the last days.

2: Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father."

Just like Abraham and Isaac before him, God had enabled Jacob to clearly see the future of his people before his death.

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Jacob's sons *had* confessed their sin against Joseph and had been forgiven, but there was still a lot of sin in their lives they had never dealt with.

No, they had *not been* good sons.

They had sinned against their father, and against the family name, and had never repented of their ill doings.

And they had 17 years in Goshen to make things right, but they had held on stubbornly without a single apology. So for most of them, their father's deathbed was more of a judgment seat than a place of blessing.

And apart from his personal dealings with his sons, Jacob's utterances were profoundly problematic, and concerned the future of the tribes of Israel yet unborn---"**that which shall befall you in the last days.**"

So Jacob talked on and on, looking far into the future, and much of what he said is still a mystery.

Actually, most of the blessings were divided up between Judah and Joseph.

The tribe of Judah would eventually become the leader in Israel, but it would be

many long years before this would come to pass.

In fact, in the early history of the nation, their leaders all came from other tribes.

Moses would come from the tribe of Levi, Joshua from the tribe of Ephraim, Gideon from Manasseh, Sampson from Dan, Samuel from Ephraim, and Saul from the tribe of Benjamin.

Actually, Judah did not receive the sceptre of leadership for 640 years, when David finally ascended the throne.

From that time on, his family would hold that sceptre.

But the amazing thing is, although Judah didn't receive the leadership of Israel for 640 years, Jacob could see it all before him at the time of his death.

And he could also see the coming of David's greater Son, the Messiah of Israel.

V 10 **"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."**

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So Judah received the sceptre of leadership both in the family of David and in his greater Son, while Joseph received a double portion of the Promised Land, and his father's personal heartfelt blessing.

V 22-26 **"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:
23: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:
24: But his bow abode in strength, and**

the arms of his hands were made strong
by the hands of the mighty God of
Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd,
the stone of Israel:)

25: Even by the God of thy father, who
shall help thee; and by the Almighty,
who shall bless thee with blessings of
heaven above, blessings of the deep
that lieth under, blessings of the
breasts, and of the womb:

26: The blessings of thy father have
prevailed above the blessings of my
progenitors unto the utmost bound of
the everlasting hills: they shall be on
the head of Joseph, and on the crown of
the head of him that was separate from
his brethren."

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Israel had completed his last task, and now he was anxious to be gone.

Genesis 49:29-33 **"And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto 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 for a possession of a buryingplace.

31: There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.

32: The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the

children of Heth.

33: And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."

Joseph saw to it that his father was embalmed, and then Jacob was buried with all the pomp and circumstance that Egypt could supply.

Genesis 50:7-10 "And 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: And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and 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 company.

10: And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days."

It was a fitting end for a great man, but Joseph didn't have long to take comfort in it.

For him, one sorrow came swiftly upon another.

After all those years of tender loving care, his brothers still didn't trust him.

How that most have hurt!

V 15-18 **"And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said,**

Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

16: And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

17: So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.

18: And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants."

So here they were, still trying to pay for their sin, when Joseph had forgiven them long ago.

V 19-21 **"And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? 20: But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. 21: Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."**

What an example this was of unmerited grace, and unmerited grace has been shown to the bride of Christ also: **"---God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."**

So don't break the Lord's heart by questioning His finished work.

When He said **"It is finished,"** it was finished.

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Joseph was 56 years old when his father died, and God gave him 54 more years to enjoy his children, his grandchildren, and even his great-grandchildren.

V 22-23 **"And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.**

23: And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees."

He must have been a loving grandfather.

And what stories he would have to tell!

There was the sad story of Cain and Abel, the account of the great flood of Noah's day, and most importantly that wonderful Abrahamic Covenant that was the inheritance of their family.

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As he grew older, I'm sure the court officials he worked with couldn't figure out why Joseph wasn't making the customary preparations for his death. They were spending fortunes on their tombs, but Joseph did nothing.

Surely a man as prudent and as rich as Joseph wouldn't neglect such an important matter!

Yes, Joseph *had* gained great riches and power, but they had only been a means to an end, not the end in themselves.

No, he wouldn't be building a magnificent tomb as a memorial to his name, or as a vehicle to the stars.

The Valley of the Kings held no interest for him, "**For he looked for a city which**

**hath foundations, whose builder and
maker is God."**

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Well, the time finally came for him to
depart this life.

V 24-26 **"And Joseph said unto his brethren,
I die: and God will surely visit you,
and bring you out of this land unto the
land which he sware to Abraham, to
Isaac, and to Jacob.**

**25: And Joseph took an oath of the
children of Israel, saying, God will
surely visit you, and ye shall carry up
my bones from hence.**

**26: So Joseph died, being an hundred
and ten years old: and they embalmed
him, and he was put in a coffin in
Egypt."**

I wouldn't be surprised if his brethren had forgotten all about Canaan.

They were living in the best pastureland in Egypt.

But Joseph hadn't forgotten Canaan, or God's promises.

So, on his deathbed, he reminded them once again that they were only *sojourners* in Egypt, and *he* wanted to go *with them* when they left.

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Many years later, Israel would honour Joseph's last request.

Joshua 24:32 **"And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of**

**silver: and it became the inheritance
of the children of Joseph."**

During a period of back-sliding in his life,
Jacob had purchased a piece of ground
near the city of Shechem.

His close relationship with the ungodly
Canaanites had brought him grief and
disgrace, and eventually he had to flee
the area, but this property still
remained in his possession.

He had purchased it as a permanent abode,
but, in fact, it would become a
cemetery, a place in the Promised Land
where his well beloved son Joseph could
await the resurrection.

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And so we end our study of a very wonderful
book, the only book in the world that
can tell us how it all began, and I'm

sure a book that would have found its way into our Lord's conversation that day as He walked to Emmaus, and
"---expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."