

Genesis 170
Evangelism's Priority
Genesis 43:15-25
August 25, 2024
Dr. Andy Woods


Let's take our Bibles this morning and open them to Genesis 43:15. This morning, we are trying to look at Genesis 43:15-25, Lord willing. The title of our message this morning is "An Evangelistic Priority."

Essentially, what is happening in the Book of Genesis is God raising up the nation of Israel. Why is God raising up the nation of Israel, beginning in Genesis 12? Well, He is raising up the nation of Israel because of what went wrong in Genesis 1-11, when God's original design for creation became marred. When man—in his rebellion—turned against God, there were consequences. Consequences follow sin like night follows the day.

God's redemptive program immediately came into existence, beginning with that very famous passage that we spent some time on back when we were in Genesis 3: Genesis 3:15. Some have called that passage the "protoevangelium": the first presentation of the Gospel.


God has decided to send His Gospel, Jesus Christ, into the world through a nation—the nation of Israel. And so God's purpose is to bless the world by fulfilling His messianic purposes in and through the nation of Israel. This is why God is raising up the nation of Israel in the Book of Genesis, which He has done through His work in the patriarchs: unconditional promises that He gave through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

GENESIS STRUCTURE



II. Genesis 12-50 (four people)

- A. Abraham (12:1–25:11)
- B. Isaac (25:12–26:35)
- C. Jacob (27–36)
- D. Joseph (37–50)**

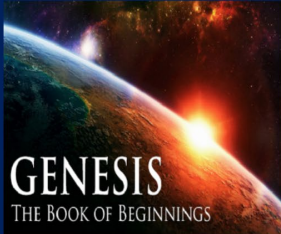


The Beginning
1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.
2 God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God called the light "day" and the darkness "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

And then you come to Genesis 37-50, in which God is raising up Joseph, not so much to start the nation of Israel—that has already been done—but to preserve the nation of Israel.

Genesis 37–50
Joseph

- I. Joseph sold unto Egypt (37)
- II. Canaan's corruption (38)
- III. Joseph falsely accused (39)
- IV. Joseph's short-term predictions (40)
- V. Joseph's elevation (41)
- VI. Joseph's first reunion with his brothers (42)
- VII. Joseph's second reunion with his brothers (43–45)**



Joseph was a historical character, just like all of the characters that we are reading about here in Genesis, including Adam and Eve. By the way, if you start playing games with Adam by saying that he was not a real character, but a fictional character, just a symbol of something, then we have a little problem, because the genealogy in Luke 3 leads from Adam to Jesus. So, if you are going to dismiss the historicity of Adam, you might as well dismiss the historicity of Jesus.

That is where we are as a culture, unfortunately: people denying that Jesus was a historical character. The atheist Christopher Hitchens, whom I was watching on a cable show, made that very argument to state that we do not know if Jesus historically existed. Well, he is saying that because our culture dismissed the historicity of Adam a long time ago. All of these characters were historical characters, including Joseph.

As we have studied the Joseph story, Joseph has been sold into Egypt (Genesis 37). The reason that he was sold into Egypt is in Genesis 38. Canaan, where Israel was at the time, was in a state of moral decay and corruption, so God had to get His nation out of Canaan.

Joseph's rise has not been easy. He has been on a very bumpy flight with a lot of turbulence. Have you noticed turbulence in your own life? Just because you are encountering turbulence does not mean that you are not getting to your proper destination. God has put all kinds of twists and turns into our lives, some of them for our growth. And I bring that up because a lot of us think that if there is any problem or difficulty in your life, you must be out of God's will. That is not necessarily the case, as is true with Joseph.

Joseph has been accused of a crime he did not commit (Genesis 39). He has made short term predictions (Genesis 40). His reputation for this preceded him, and that led him to being elevated to second-in-command in Egypt (Genesis 41), after Pharaoh had a couple of dreams that he needed help with. Pharaoh was so impressed by Joseph's prediction of seven years of prosperity followed by seven years of adversity that he elevated him to second-in-command in Egypt, and put him in charge of procuring food and grain and so forth.

During those seven scarce years, here come Joseph's brothers, traveling from Canaan to Egypt to find grain in the midst of famine. That leads to Joseph's first reunion with his brothers (Genesis 42). These very brothers had betrayed him and left him for dead when he was 17, back in Genesis 37. He recognizes them. They do not recognize him. Now, he is putting them through a character test, to see if they have the same standards of morality that had betrayed him 20 years earlier.

This is how the test is going to work: Joseph is going to keep Simeon in Egypt. The rest of the brothers will go back to Canaan. They had talked about their family; they had talked about their youngest brother. So Joseph wants them to bring their family from Canaan to him in Egypt, including their youngest, Benjamin. Joseph is doing this to figure out if they have treated Benjamin better than they had treated him 20 years earlier, to determine if their character has really matured.

Because chronological age is just an age. There are some people who age chronologically, but never really grow up. We want to be people who are not just aging chronologically, but people who are growing spiritually. I know older people who are, spiritually speaking, very, very immature. And I know very, very young people who are very mature. It is not a matter of chronological age, but our development and growth in Christ.

Joseph is trying to figure out if his brothers have changed over the last 20 years by putting them through this test. In fact, if you go back to Genesis 42:15-16, you will see the word "tested" there twice. Joseph is putting them through a test much like the Lord puts us through different tests, not so much to determine for the Lord where we are growing, but really for us. Are we growing? Am I falling for the exact same temptations that I fell for a year ago? Am I becoming discouraged under trial just like I did five years ago? Or have I learned to grow in and through them? The Lord constantly puts us through these tests.

And then we move into Genesis 43-45, where we have Joseph's second reunion with his brothers. We saw Genesis 43:1-14 last week, in which Jacob sent his sons, including Benjamin, back to Egypt, to receive grain in the midst of famine. Why? Because they burnt through all their savings. There's a severe famine in the land. The grain that they brought back the first time to Canaan was adequate for a while, but now the supply is gone.

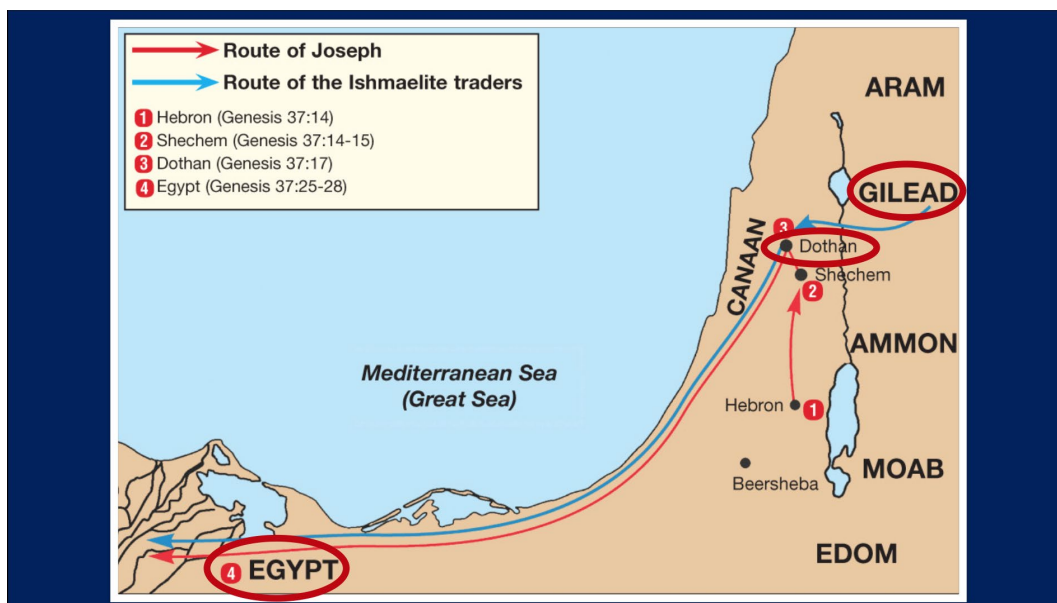
And this leads to Joseph's second reunion with his betrayers. He recognizes them, but

they still do not recognize him. Genesis 43:15-34 begins with the brothers' departure from Canaan to go to Egypt. Notice, if you will, Genesis 43:15:

"So the men took this present, and they took double the money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph" (Genesis 43:15).

Notice the end of verse 15: *"they stood before Joseph."* Here come the brothers, after departing a second time from Canaan to the land of Egypt. This is a journey, as we mentioned before, of about 250 miles that took about three weeks. Again, we are dealing with real geography, real places, and real people. They left Hebron in Canaan and probably went to Memphis. And then you have their arrival.

Here is a map that shows you the journey.



Again, Joseph recognizes them, but they do not recognize him. Earlier, we talked about how he shaved his beard to appear before Pharaoh back in Genesis 41. That's not something that the Hebrews did, but Joseph did it, and so they did not recognize him. Besides, 20 years had passed, during which they thought that Joseph was long since dead.

Here are these brothers in their sin, standing before Joseph. If Joseph is a type or a prefiguring of Jesus, and we have tried to argue that he is, there are astounding parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ.

This becomes a parallel of the idea that everyone will one day stand before Jesus Christ. Paul, in Acts 17:31, in his speech on Mars Hill, concludes his sermon as follows:

"because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead (Acts 17:31).

Jesus has risen from the dead, and He is coming back to judge this world in righteousness, and every single human being is going to stand before Him. And as Acts 17 finishes, it tells about the three reactions to Paul's sermon, there in Greece on Mars Hill. Some people said, "We will make a decision later." Other people mocked Paul because the idea of resurrection was so foreign to the Greeks. But others believed.

I am here to tell you that those are basically the same reactions to the proclamation of Jesus today. Some people just postpone a decision, but the tragedy of that is that you may not have an opportunity later to make that decision to trust what He has done for us as a free gift: our salvation. Other people just mock, laugh, and ridicule; but others believe.

The obvious application of this is, which category do you find yourself in today? Even as I teach these things, the people listening, either here in the building or online, have the same basic three reactions to this idea that every single human being will one day stand before Jesus. We react so aggressively against the idea that all roads lead to God because we are a product of the New Age idea that everyone has their own path to God.

But the truth of the matter is that all roads ultimately lead to Jesus Christ. You either come in faith, receiving as a free gift what Jesus has done in our place as the Lamb; or if you do not want anything to do with that and reject that, or postpone a decision until later (which actually is a decision in and of itself), or if you go to your grave mocking that, all these will stand before Jesus Christ, not as before the Lamb, but as before the judge. So when you think about it correctly, all roads lead to Jesus Christ. I have to meet Him one way or the other, so am I going to meet Him as my judge, or I am going to meet Him as my Savior?

I am sort of a path of least resistance type myself, so I would much prefer to meet Him as my Savior, as my Lamb rather than as my Lion, or as my judge. But every human being will, at some point, in some way, in some fashion, stand before Jesus Christ.

So these brothers are now standing in the presence of Joseph, who is a type, if you will, of Jesus. And then in Genesis 43:16-25 the brothers start to interact with the steward. Joseph, now being second-in-command in Egypt, has stewards and servants. The brothers have an extended interaction with them before they sit down for a meal with Joseph.

Before Joseph and his brothers have their meal at noon, which is, in the ancient Near East, when large meals were typically eaten, the brothers have this interaction with Joseph's steward. In Genesis 43:16-25, notice Joseph's instructions to the steward:

"When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, 'Bring the men into the house, and slay an animal and make ready; for the men are to dine with me at noon.' So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house" (Genesis 43:16-17).

Joseph sees the brothers coming with Benjamin. Most likely he's thinking, "Am I going to figure out now, once and for all, if my brothers passed the test? It's a good thing Benjamin is still alive; at least it shows that over the last 20 years, they did not treat him like they treated me. There must be some sort of change in their character." And so they decide to have this big meeting, or meal, at noon.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum, in his commentary, says that, in the ancient Near East, noon was the big meal. In fact, Genesis 43:25 says:

"So they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there" (Genesis 43:25).

And Arnold Fruchtenbaum says that that is the same time the big meal takes place in the Middle East today. It is interesting that when you study the Bible, current geography fits the text, and the cultures of the day fit the text right down to Joseph shaving before he has to appear before Pharaoh in Genesis 41.

When the opportunity is given to me, I always like to present the fact that the culture fits the text as something very obvious for us to understand. The Bible is a history book. It is not VeggieTales. It is not "Jack and the Beanstalk." It is not "spiritual truths that you people on Sunday do, but leave the real history to me, the PhD, Monday through Friday in the public school classroom."

Our culture has driven a wedge between actual history and spiritual truth. And yet, over and over again, you see that the history of the Bible takes place in a milieu—cultural inheritance—that can easily be defended. That is how God decided to give us His truth and His word. You are reading the Bible, not just spiritual truths (as wonderful as they are). These are spiritual truths that arose out of an actual historical context that can be validated geographically, archeologically, and historically, right down to the big meal taking place at noon.

And then you see the steward's obedience right there in Genesis 43:17, which says:

"So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house. (Genesis 43:17).

And then you drop down to Genesis 43:18, and you see the brothers being escorted into Joseph's presence for this meal in a state of fear. Notice what it says:

"Now the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house;

and they said, 'It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, and take us for slaves with our donkeys'" (Genesis 43:18).

Part of the test, after they paid for the grain on the first trip, involved Joseph having his people put extra money in their sacks to make it look like they did not really pay for the grain. It's another test. Are they going to return the money which was supposed to pay for the grain or not? Now, in this case, it looks like they are passing the test. They're not thieves because they are returning the money. But they think, now that they have this "illegitimate" money: "We're in a lot of trouble. And that is why this man, whom we do not recognize as Joseph, wants to talk to us." This is why they are in a state of fear.

People who are fearful are fearful of one thing: the fact that, if they were in the position of power, they would treat others illegitimately. "Boy, we would be really retributive if we were in Joseph's position," the brothers are saying. They are saying, "That is how we would have treated crime. That is how we would have treated us!"

And they know that they are not in the seat of power, and that is why they are afraid. Keep that in mind when you see people in fear because of authority issues; essentially what they are afraid of is, if they were in the position of authority and "the shoe were on the other foot," so to speak, they would be treating things very, very harshly. Therefore, they are afraid that that same treatment is about to be aimed at them.

But in Genesis 43:19 they approach the steward:

"So they came near to Joseph's house steward, and spoke to him at the entrance of the house" (Genesis 43:19).

And then they give this long explanation in Genesis 43:20-22:

"and said, 'Oh, my lord, we indeed came down the first time to buy food, and it came about when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and behold, each man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full. So we have brought it back in our hand. We have also brought down other money in our hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money in our sacks'" (Genesis 43:20-22).

Here comes this long explanation as the brothers are interacting with the steward. "The first time we came (Genesis 43:20) was simply to buy grain (true statement) but we discovered this money in our sacks. That bothered us because we thought we had used that money to pay for the first round of grain (Genesis 43:21), so we have brought back double money. We have more money to buy more grain. And the money that was in our sacks, whether it is old money or new money, we brought it back. We're honest men. And, to be honest with you, we do not even know how the money that we paid for the

original grain ended up in our sacks to begin with!" Pleading ignorance (Genesis 43:22).

What are you seeing in these brothers? What you are seeing here is growth. You are seeing maturity. You are seeing honesty. You are seeing people who are grappling with the reality and the consequences of their sin; and trying to do better. So, it is a positive thing that you are seeing in these brothers, because they are going through the process of growth, the process of progressive sanctification.

That, beloved, is the exact same process that we are going through in Jesus Christ. We are saved by faith alone, through Christ alone, to the glory of God alone, based on the Word of God alone. But God loves us too much to see us remain as infants. And so the calling of the Christian is to spiritually mature, to spiritually respond.

What determines if a Christian is growing or not? I like the definition given by the late Dr. Bruce Baker. Maturity as a Christian has very little to do with how long you've been saved. It has very little to do with gifting or giftedness, talent, or ability. Look at the Corinthian congregation: they had gifts and they had talent, but they were not a very mature flock at all. Maturity as a Christian is not the amount of time one has been saved, but it is the amount of time one has spent actively obeying the will of God in his life. That is how you know you are growing.

It is not about how long I have been saved; it is about the amount of time that I have actually said "yes" to God's truth in my life and reckoned dead the deeds of the flesh. In other words, the amount of time spent in active obedience. Once again, we do not accomplish active obedience as Christians through our own power and through our own energy, but as we rely on God's power and God's resources. The amount of time that you spend under the resources of God, telling God yes, and reckoning dead the deeds of the flesh is the amount of time that you are actually maturing or growing as a Christian.

When you select leaders in a church, as we do in this church, the congregation nominates leaders. These are the types of people that you should nominate and select. You are not necessarily looking for the best-educated person. You are not necessarily looking for the most talented person. You are not even looking for the most successful person in the eyes of the world. You are looking for the person who has spent the most time in their Christian life and Christian character actively and effectively obeying the will, the truth, and the things of God. That is what growth looks like. Apparently, it is happening here with these brothers.

We go down to Genesis 43:23, and we see the steward's response to all of this. Notice, if you will, Genesis 43:23:

"He said, 'Be at ease, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money.' Then he brought Simeon out to them" (Genesis 43:23).

Notice the first thing the steward says here: *"Be at ease, do not be afraid."* It is so easy as a Christian to live your life in fear. Did you know that the Bible says 365 times to not be afraid? That is one time for every day of the calendar. Every time you wake up in the morning and open your Bible, God says, "Do not be afraid. Do not be in fear." Jesus, over and over again, said to his disciples, "Fear not."

Philippians 4:6-7 says:

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

Notice the Bible says, *"Be anxious for nothing."* It does not say to be anxious for your job, but everything else? Do not worry about that. The Bible does not say be anxious about your house payment, but everything else? Do not worry about that. The Bible does not say be anxious about your conflict with your boss, but everything else? Do not be anxious about that. The Bible says, "Do not be anxious about anything. Do not be anxious about health. Do not be anxious about finances. Do not be anxious about the fear of man or the threats of man." The Bible says, "Trust everything to the Lord."

2 Timothy 1:7 puts it this way:

"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).

Every time I feel anxiety and fear, I know that I am going back to my sin nature, because the Bible is very clear that God in His Spirit, which is within me, has not given me a spirit of timidity.

Peter in 1 Peter 5:7 puts it this way:

"casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Casting all your anxiety, not some of it, on Him. Well, why should I do that, Peter? Peter says, "I am glad you asked: 'Because He cares for you.'" What am I to do with the natural angst of life, the natural worry? I am to take all of those things and I am to submit them to Jesus Christ who cares for me.

Keep in mind, when Peter wrote this, he was dealing with people that were about to move into the Neronian persecution, where Nero would actually light Christians on fire as he would travel through Rome in his chariot with his underage, homosexual boy lovers. That is what kind of person Nero was. If you think politics today is tough, you ain't seen nothing yet! He would scoff at the Christians by saying, "Oh, they call themselves the light of the world. Look at them now. They're on fire."

Nero, of course, burned Rome to the ground and blamed it on the Christians. This is the context of Peter's statements here. In A.D. 64, Nero financed the Roman Colosseum, where Christians would be gored to death by ravenous and starving beasts in front of jeering crowds. And in that context, Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5:7:

"casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

You want to talk about a group of people, there in the persecution, that had cause for anxiety? And yet, the instruction for the believer in the worst of the worst circumstances is to cast your anxiety upon the Lord.

Joseph's brothers are worked up because "Boy, we know in the back of our minds we treated Joseph unfairly. And if the shoe were on the other foot and we were in the position of power, we would pursue total justice." And the steward calms their nerves by saying "Be at ease, do not be afraid."

There is something in Genesis 43:23 that gets overlooked by a lot of commentators:

"He said, 'Be at ease, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money.' Then he brought Simeon out to them" (Genesis 43:23).

Notice the reference by the Egyptian steward to *"your God and the God of your father."* You might ask yourself, how could a steward in Egypt, who has no contact with the God of Israel, refer to these brothers as subjects of "your God and the God of your fathers?" How could an Egyptian steward have that spiritual knowledge and information? The obvious answer to that question is that he got that information from Joseph, meaning that Joseph was involved in evangelism. That fits very nicely with God's purpose for the nation of Israel, does it not?

God said concerning Israel:

"And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." (Genesis 12:3).

Why did God choose Israel to pour out His blessings upon them? Because it was always God's purpose to see those blessings exported to the different nations and people groups of the earth. God's very purpose in raising up Israel was evangelistic; and it is interesting that Joseph never lost sight of that. He seems to be a person who evangelized and talked about the things of God everywhere he went, or else this Egyptian steward would have no knowledge about *"your God and the God of your father."* God blessed Israel so Israel would be a blessing to the world.

Now, do we have a parallel to us in the Church Age? Of course we do. Why has God

blessed the church? Why is it that Ephesians 1:3 indicates that we have been "blessed with every blessing in the heavenly places?" Why did God set us apart and bless us the way He has spiritually? God has always intended that these blessings that we have would spill over to others. When God blesses a person, He does not have just that person in mind. He has in mind all of the people who will be reached through that particular person.

When you study the doctrine of spiritual gifts, spirit-empowered abilities for service, it's a fascinating study. And by the way, just remember the mnemonic device 12-12-4-4: Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4. If you were to go home and read those four chapters, you would have all the data in the New Testament concerning spiritual gifts. As you study spiritual gifts, what you will discover is that the intended beneficiary of each gift is somebody else. When God gave me, for example, the gift of teaching, He did not have in mind me alone. He had in mind all of the people that could be reached through the gift that He had given me.

It is the same for the gifts of evangelism, wisdom, knowledge, administration, leadership; all of those edifying gifts which we believe are alive and well today in the body of Christ. God gives gifts so that you can be a blessing to somebody else. Even the issue of finances! Maybe God has blessed you in that area; given you resources above and beyond what you need; and at some point you stop and ask yourself, why do I have all of these things? Because God intended to use you as a vessel, or vehicle, to reach other people.

Jonah in the Book of Jonah had lost sight of this when God said, "Go to Nineveh." When you look at a map, Nineveh is in the east. Where did Jonah go? He went west, 180 degrees out of the will of God, because he really did not want the grace of God to fall on the Ninevites. Jonah did not like this talk of the grace of God, and yet that is why God blessed Israel: so Israel could be a blessing to Nineveh, Assyria. This is why God blesses the church: so that the church can be a blessing to other people.

We are blessed to be a blessing, and the truth of the matter is that you will never be fulfilled in the Christian life if you are walking outside of that. As long as my holy trinity consists of me, myself, and I, and I am inward-focused and narcissistic, and I do not understand that the purpose of my life is to be a blessing to other people, then how can I experience any fulfillment in life? The Bible is very clear that it is better to give than to receive. And what a joy it is to be used by God in a way that is beneficial to somebody else! That is where you find fulfillment in the Christian life.

So many Christians, as you listen to them talk, are really not walking in joy. They are really not walking in fulfillment. And part of the reason for that is their lives have turned inward, much like Jonah, which is very easy for us to do in our sinfulness. It is all about us, what we have. It is all about our church. It is all about our gifting. And God says, "No, I blessed you so that you could be a blessing to somebody else." That is God's purpose for Israel: God blessed Israel so Israel would be a blessing to others.

It is interesting to me that Joseph, with all of his problems and all of his ups and downs, never lost sight of his evangelistic priority to share the good news wherever he was; in this case, with his Egyptian steward, who obviously had some kind of knowledge of Joseph's God through Joseph's evangelistic presence.

What a great men's group we had yesterday. Did anybody come to that? I think John Cross is sitting right there. He was the speaker, dealing with the whole subject of missions, evangelism, church planning; talking about how our lives can make a difference. How important it is to hear that over and over again, so that we do not lose our presence, our focus, and our evangelistic priority in this world, and become inwardly turned.

So many churches become inwardly focused, inwardly turned. I am very content that here at Sugar Land Bible Church we give, I believe, roughly the top fifth of our budget to support missionaries. Many of them you see during the missions moments. Pray for this missionary; pray for that missionary. And the truth of the matter is, you might not be a formal missionary, but we are all called to be missionaries, are we not? Because you have a group of people that need to hear what you have to say in any walk of life that you are in, and that is what Joseph is doing. He is walking in that evangelistic purpose, fulfilling Genesis 12:3.

Now, something else that is very interesting here that I will call your attention to is when the steward says:

"Be at ease, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money" (Genesis 43:23).

In other words, the steward financially kept track of the fact that the money that they had in their sacks was given to them by Joseph. The steward says "It is right here in the record books that you guys paid. The money in your sacks was just Joseph's test for you. But financially, in terms of accounting, it is all right here. I knew all along that you had paid. You are not thieves. Be at ease."

For the steward to make that kind of statement, does that not imply that the steward had ability in accounting? Some kind of knowledge of business, some kind of knowledge of mathematics? There was obviously some sort of accounting system in place here.

Why even bring this up? Because this anthropology, or doctrine of man, is totally contradictory to what the world system is sending our direction. We all come of age here in the United States of America, in our world system, through the evolutionary paradigm, which is basically from the goo to you by way of the zoo, over billions of years. If that paradigm is true, man is likely at his most sophisticated level right now. We are evolved, naked apes. In fact, if you want to go visit your relatives, go to the county zoo and you will see them there as orangutans.

The idea with evolution, which is a worldview, is that the further back you go in time, the more simple people are—the more they are like the ape, the more they are like the orangutan. The idea that man did not have language or writing in ancient times. In fact, he did not even know what fire was until lightning struck. And he started to talk, and he grunted a few things and scribbled a few things on the cave wall. Over the course of time, a language was developed.

This is what we are all subjected to constantly. It is interesting how, point after point, your Bible indicates the exact opposite. Almost every major thing people believe today the Bible, when you get into it, will say 180 degrees the opposite. The Bible indicates that the further back in time you go, the more sophisticated people become. After all, in Genesis 4, we see a line descending from Cain that was an evil line, but they were technologically sophisticated. These were people who built cities.

Genesis 4:17 says:

"Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son" (Genesis 4:17).

And they had livestock. Genesis 4:20 says:

"Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock" (Genesis 4:20).

Genesis 4:21 says:

"His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe" (Genesis 4:21).

Genesis 4:22:

"As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah" (Genesis 4:22).

This is very interesting because here they are at the dawn of human history, dealing with bronze and iron. "Oh, come on, pastor. Haven't you taken a university course? And don't you watch the History Channel and A&E? We all know that there was a Bronze Age first, and then (much later in time) came the Iron Age." I am aware of all of that, but here are the two metals being worked simultaneously at the dawn of human history.

The truth of the matter is that, as you go back in time, you find a very sophisticated anthropology or doctrine of man, in harmony with what the Bible teaches and the opposite of what the evolutionary world deals with.

Do you believe there was writing before the Flood, in the days of Noah? I have sat in classrooms where professors completely ridiculed that idea. Yet the Bible says that before the Flood there was writing, because it talks about a book.

Genesis 5:1-2 says:

"This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created" (Genesis 5:1-2).

It would be hard to have a book without writing, right?

Dr. Henry Morris in his commentary *The Genesis Record* writes:

*"Musical instruments, another important aspect of modern culture, were also in early development. All of these things, in addition, confirm the necessary coexistence of a written language for formal communications. This is further intimated by the use of the word 'book' in Genesis 5:1. More and more modern archaeological discoveries today are verifying the high degree of technology possessed by the earliest men, thus indirectly validating this Biblical testimony."¹ (Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 147-148)"*

As you go back in time, you will discover that man was capable of doing things that we do not even have an explanation for today. Here are a few examples from an article by Don Landis titled "Ancient Man—Genius or Primitive?": the palace at Knossos on Crete, La Bastida in Spain, Stonehenge in England, The Great Wall of China, the architecture of the Incas; and of course, the Great Pyramids of Egypt. The Egypt of the pyramids is the Egypt here in the Book of Genesis. It is very likely that Abraham, the great patriarch of Judaism, saw the pyramids of Egypt, as did Joseph.

Here in the Bible is an example of math, accounting, and record keeping, violating the evolutionary paradigm that the further you go back in time the more simple people are.

Why even bring this up? How is this relevant to our lives? Because now, more and more discoveries are being made that demonstrate the ancient sophistication of man. If you are trapped in an evolutionary worldview, you have no explanation for these archaeological discoveries.

So what is being promoted today to explain all of this? Well, what they are moving toward today is people from outer space. I am not kidding when I say that. You have to have some kind of explanation, and people from outer space fits very well with New Age

¹ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 147-148.

theology: ascended masters, people that are more evolved than we are speaking back into our world. And they are trying to explain all of these things through these ascended masters who sort of seeded these realities on our planet a long time ago.

So, now you are dealing with a generation that is open to spirit guides, who are really demons, because Satan masquerades as an angel of light. A lot of people think they are talking to spirit guides, when, in reality, all they are talking to is a demon masquerading as a spirit guide—the Age of Aquarius, the people calling out to these higher, more evolved life forms so that they can teach us how to function the way we should in our world, how we can bring in peace and nirvana.

Why do people go for these beliefs? Because they really do not have a biblical—or any explanation, really—for the intricacies and complexities of ancient culture. So they just attribute the whole thing to ascended masters. You see, as a Christian, you do not have to do that because you have an explanation. Your explanation is that the anthropology of evolution is wrong. The more you go back in time, the more intricate and complex man is; the more you come into the present and then into the future, the more simple man becomes.

Well, wait a minute, pastor! We have the internet! We have microwave ovens! We can text each other! Well, some commentary on texting. It has really made us a lot dumber, texting. So when you grade papers as a college professor, you find that is what this current generation is doing, communicating with these little, simplistic abbreviations where they cannot even string together a basic sentence, let alone a paragraph, let alone an entire paper.

Do you know what the Federalist Papers are? The Federalist Papers were written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay. They were published in the New York newspaper to convince the New Yorkers to accept and ratify and adopt the new constitution, which came into existence in America's founding era. Most people today have never read the Federalist Papers because they are very scholarly and hard to understand because it is in Old English.

But did you know that the Federalist Papers were written to the level of a farmer, probably at or below the eighth grade level? In other words, the lowest in the intellectual world, at the time America was getting off the ground, could easily understand the Federalist Papers. Today, they are looked at as great scholarly resources.

And by the way, the reason we have the internet and other technology today, and texting, is not because we are such intellectual giants. We have accumulated knowledge capital. We are the latest generation in time. We are building off of what has been previously handed to us. The knowledge starts to roll like a snowball. All this technology does not mean that we are somehow intellectual giants. The truth of the matter is that we are probably—and I am not trying to be mean when I say this—some of the dumbest people that have ever lived.

Biblically speaking, Paul in Romans 1 says that the further you get away from the things of God, the more your intellect becomes darkened. Keep that in mind when you are with your children and your grandchildren and you are watching the History Channel and A&E together, and all of a sudden they talk about some great discovery from the past—like how the pyramids were built—and your grandson or your child or granddaughter starts to fall for the explanation that these were seeded by aliens (ascended masters), you have the ability to tell them that that is not necessarily true. Biblically speaking, as you go back in time, the more sophisticated people become.

Think about this for a minute. Noah—I understand he was given direct instruction by God—built an ark capable of enduring a global storm. Engineers have looked into this. When you look at some of the pagan Flood accounts—and they have arks in their Flood accounts—their numbers are all wrong.

John Woodmorappe in his book *Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study* talks about how Noah's Ark was built to exact engineering specifications, so that it would not roll over and over like a bottle bobbing around on the ocean. It was built with the exact design that would sustain life and survive in the midst of a global flood. Think about all of the engineering involved in that: mechanical engineering, carpentry, drafting. Noah's Ark was created by someone who was obviously not some toothless hillbilly. Noah was an absolute genius!

It is the same with writing that existed prior to the Flood. It is the same with all of these archaeological discoveries that we are reading about right here in your Bible. Here is just another one: the steward says, "Be at ease. I have got an accounting record that you guys paid the money for the grain. So relax!" Accounting involves recordkeeping, language, numbers, and writing. There is no need to believe that man, as you go back in time, becomes more simple. In fact, the opposite is true.

Going back to the steward's response in Genesis 43:23-24: first, he gives Simeon back (Genesis 4:23). In Genesis 43:24, he looks out for the brother's welfare, as they are preparing to have this big meal at noon with Joseph.

Genesis 43:24 says:

"Then the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys fodder" (Genesis 43:24).

And we are wrapping it up with Genesis 43:25. The brothers now prepare to meet Joseph, whom they do not know is Joseph.

Genesis 43:25:

"So they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there" (Genesis 43:25).

Notice that "noon" is mentioned there in Genesis 43:25, just like back in Genesis 43:16.

What is this information about a present? Well, that goes back to Genesis 43:11:

"Then their father Israel said to them, 'If it must be so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds'" (Genesis 43:11).

"So the men took this present, and they took double the money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph" (Genesis 43:15).

What exactly did they bring? *"Some of the best products of the land...and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds."* Now, look at this list of gifts: they are to bring myrrh. That sounds familiar, does it not? They are to bring aromatic gum, frankincense. Frankincense and myrrh. That rings a bell, does it not?

Matthew 2:11 says:

"After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11).

Now I do not see the gold here in the Joseph story, but I see the frankincense and myrrh. Could this be something else that the Holy Spirit has built into Scripture, using Joseph as a type of Jesus? Joseph was elevated at age 30, which is when Jesus started His earthly ministry. Joseph was rejected by his own brothers, the Jewish people, but later restored to them. That reminds me of what happened to Jesus in His first coming, and how he is going to be restored to Israel in the second coming. Joseph had a Gentile bride. That reminds me a little bit of our relationship to Jesus, as the Gentile church. And here is another example of this typology, where these brothers are coming from afar, bringing gifts, two of which to me sound an awful lot like the gifts that the Magi brought to Jesus a little under 2,000 years later.

Jesus, when He was walking with the disciples on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection, began to talk about the prophecies concerning Him written in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms—the three major divisions of Hebrew Bible (Tanakh)—the Torah (the Law), the Nevi'im (the Prophets), and the Ketuvim (the Writings), Psalms being the most prominent book in the Ketuvim. Together, the names of these three divisions form the acronym Tanakh.

"Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to

them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures" (Luke 24:27).

Luke 24:44:

"Now He said to them, 'These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled'" (Luke 24:44).

As He was walking with His disciples on the Emmaus Road, Luke 24:32 says that the disciples' hearts burned within them, because of the accuracy and specificity of the things He spoke about.

If I had one shot to go back in a time machine and hear just one teaching of Jesus, I am picking the Emmaus Road. I would love to hear what He talked about, how all of these things written so far in advance were actually pointing to Him to the point where, as He was articulating these things on this walk in His resurrected body (they are in un-resurrected bodies) speaking back and forth, that as their eyes were being opened their hearts were burning within them.

You have in your Bible history before it happens. I would never know that frankincense and myrrh were a type of Jesus if I had just the Book of Genesis. But I do not have just the Book of Genesis. I have the New Testament which records the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. I can look backward and see these intricate types that the Holy Spirit has built into the Word of God.

I do not know of any other holy book that does this kind of thing, do you? Certainly not the Quran! Certainly not the Book of Mormon or any other alleged holy book that you want to point to! But there it is, right there in your Bible. The Lord loves us so much that He built in just a few more proofs for the doubter that Jesus is the real deal.

If you are here today and do not know Christ personally, our exhortation to you is that Jesus is the real deal. You are not going to find something better than Jesus Christ; and you can come into a relationship with Him by simply receiving (which happens through one condition: believing, which means trusting) what Jesus did for us on the cross 2,000 years ago.

Jesus, through His death, burial, resurrection and ascension, did everything that needed to be done to fix a problem we cannot fix: our sin and resulting separation from a holy God. His final words on the cross were not "It is 97% done." No! They were "It is finished." And so a person comes into a right relationship with God by simply believing, or trusting, what Jesus did in their place. That is what it means to receive this free gift from Jesus Christ.