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THE LIFE OF JOSEPH – LESSON 20

JACOB ADOPTS JOSEPH'S SONS

Israel was now very well settled in Egypt at Goshen. They were prospering in wealth, possessions, and the family was multiplying (Genesis 47:27).

Jacob was growing old and weak after several years there. He called for Joseph to come to him. He had his beloved son place his hand under his thigh to bind him to an oath regarding his last wishes. He said, in Genesis 47:29-30, ***“Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt. But I will lie (to rest) with my fathers...”***. Joseph made that promise.

It came to pass a while later that Joseph got word that his father was sick (Genesis chapter 48). He took his two sons with him to see Jacob who confirmed that God had given him and his seed the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. He told Joseph that he was taking his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim, as his own sons and that any future sons that Joseph may beget could be kept as Joseph's own sons.

Joseph then presented the two sons to Jacob for a blessing. This would also seal the adoption of them to Jacob. Joseph put Ephraim's hand toward Jacob's left hand and Manasseh's hand toward Jacob's right hand because as the elder son, Manasseh should have the greater blessing. Not so! Jacob switched and put his right hand on the head of the younger Ephraim and his left hand on the head of the older Manasseh, crossing his hands and arms to do so. Joseph strongly objected and tried to switch his father's hands to follow the accepted custom, but Jacob would not have it. He said that the younger would be greater than the older in verse 19, setting Ephraim ahead.

This was history repeating itself (Genesis 25:23) as the younger Jacob became heir to the blessing and the promise of God given to him by his father over Esau. Jacob also gave an extra portion of inheritance to Joseph so that Ephraim and Manasseh could each have a full portion equal to Jacob's older sons. He also reaffirmed in verse 21, ***“God shall be with you, and bring (all of) you again unto the land (Canaan) of your fathers.”*** This prophecy was fulfilled over 400 years after. Neither Jacob nor Joseph lived to see it.

You and I must know and understand that the unconditional promises of God will absolutely be fulfilled whether or not we live to see it. Many mothers have prayed for years of their lifetime for an adult child to be saved, but not live to see it although the child gets saved years after her passing. Don't give up hope just because you are not seeing an answer.

Yes, there are some of His promises that are conditional. Those may not be met unless the stipulated condition is met. However, His unconditional ones will always be met within His own time.