May 8, 2020

Subject: The Bones of Joseph

It is a minor part of the Exodus story. One might miss it unless one looks very carefully. We see Moses, the midst of both preparing for, and also leading, the exodus of his people out of Egypt. Yet Moses finds time to add one more thing to what must have been one of biblical history's most significant to do lists. He remembers to pick up the bones of Joseph and take them with the people on their journey (Exodus 13:19). Four hundred years earlier Joseph had made his brothers promise to take his bones to the Promised Land when the time came for God to lead the people out of Egypt. Moses keeps a 400-year-old promise which he did not even personally make. And he does so in the chaotic aftermath of the Passover evening. Amazing!

This reminds me of our intimate connection to the ones who have gone before us. Like Joseph they find their promises and hopes fulfilled in the actions of those of us who come after them. Even more importantly, it encourages me to remember that it does not necessarily honor the past to live in the past. Going to the Promised Land by escaping Egypt was the best way to honor the great leadership which Joseph had exercised in Egypt. This is also noteworthy because we are in a time not unlike the time Moses's people experienced on the evening of the Exodus. Things are chaotic. Much of what we have done, we can no longer do in the same way during this pandemic. However, we have a chance to do traditional things in a new way such as worship, Bible study and even fellowship. You will see that in this newsletter. I hope you will also read how we are continuing our Food Pantry work in a new way through a new partnership.

Remember as you read this newsletter that what we may change is not out of a lack of respect for things we have done and the ways in which we have done them in the past. But rather these are efforts to fulfill the hopes and promises which gave rise to those original things. And we try to keep those promises in this new day and strange land.

~David