

Hebrews 11:20-22

20 By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. 21 By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. 22 By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

Community Group Study 7 Feb 2010

Introduction

The blessing of God upon Abraham is passed down through his children in faith. Far from being anecdotal records of what happened and prescriptions of what actions we should take in our life, this record shows how the faith of three men altered the course of history.

The essence of the faith of Isaac and Jacob meant that they acted and lived according to God's will – not man's – in terms of who would receive the line of blessing.

In spite of strong circumstances – deceit, impersonation, culture, tradition and family pressure, the line of blessing is passed by faith through unlikely persons.

Joseph rose to great prominence in Egypt, yet looked forward to the day that Israel would leave, and showed his great longing for God's promise by commanding that his remains, though dead, should be brought out to that promised land.

Discussion

>>How did Isaac, Jacob and Joseph submit their wills to God?

>>It is not wrong for the blessing to pass to the firstborn. Why did God choose for the blessing to go to Jacob and Ephraim?

>>How did Isaac and Jacob know who ought to receive the blessing? Can we know in the way that they know?

Explanation

>>Why did Isaac not reverse/void the blessing pronounced on Jacob due to deception?

>>What is Joseph looking forward to when he gives directions for his bones to be moved?

>>Joseph's riches and position in Egypt did not diminish his longing for a land he had never seen. How can we likewise consider our earthly benefits "rubbish" in comparison to our heavenly promise?

Application

>>What aspects of our culture prevent us from following God fully?

>>Even if, like Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, we never lived to see God's promises come true, how can we still have that real faith in God's promises?

>>How can we, while here on earth, give testimony to our great expectation of our eternal home to come?