

By Faith Joseph....
Hebrews 11:22

We've been seeing how these struggling Christian's faltered and how the writer seeks to strengthen them by pointing them to the power of saving faith. "It is the assurance of things hoped for...." It is the mode of existence for the righteous. **"Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back my soul has no pleasure in him."**

He starts at the beginning of biblical history with righteous Abel and has come now to Joseph. The patriarchs transmitted the covenant promise from one to another.

Both Jacob and Joseph made arrangements to transported out of Egypt into Canaan for burial. **"And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, 'Jacob, Jacob.' And he said, 'here am I.' Then He said, 'I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and 'Joseph's hand shall close your eyes.'" Gen. 46:2-4.**

Joseph's is exceedingly clear in his twice repeated, **"but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."** Gen. 50:24ff.

The writer sees this as a singular instance of **"the assurance of things hoped for...."** It is precious in two respects:

- In the way he makes preparation for that which lies far in the future- that which he would never see in this life. This is clear in the language.... **Cf. Gen. 50:24ff.**
 - In the way it conclusively proves his faith was in something much greater than the land of Canaan. He enjoyed such wealth, power and prominence in Egypt that belief in a promise of land would've meant very little to him.
1. **It was a dying faith.** Many of the examples given open to us faith at the close of life. This should be of deep interest to us. Why?
 - a. **Do we have this type of faith?** Do we have a faith that will support us amidst the frailties of old age, when health is failing and life itself is dissolving?
 - b. **Let us lay up truth against that day.** Nothing but faith in the gospel will allow a sane person to calmly face death. **Illustr. Machen, Lloyd-Jones.**

2. **The way it was expressed.** He expressed it in two ways:

a. **He was consumed with the promise.** This is of tremendous significance. In the hour of his death he wasn't concerned with the disposal of his estate but with the transference of the messianic hope. He valued the promise over all the world could give him.

b. **He proclaimed it to his posterity.** He believed there would be a time of oppression and bondage. He foresaw a day they would be 'visited' and 'brought up.' Cf. **Gen. 15:7; 46:2-4.** This must've had a tremendous effect on Israel. The testimony of eminent saints is a great encouragement to the church. Note that the promise of bondage didn't weaken his faith!

c. **He requested his bones be brought out.** Cf. **Gen. 50:25.** Why? Surely he didn't believe it would change his experience.

i. **To be clearly identified with Israel.** He wouldn't let it be said he was an Egyptian. He wanted to be clearly identified with the promise.

ii. **To encourage the faith of his brethren.** He wanted to express his confidence in the promise in a way that gave the hope against the difficult road ahead of them.

This is biblical faith. It alone can face the rugged realities of life, bear us through them and look death in the face.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side;