Study of Jacob - Part 9

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Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev Kenneth Stewart

[0:00] The Lord's Blessing Verse 8, verse 8, But Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under Anok, and the name of it was called Alon-Bahuth.

And again, verse 19, And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephraim, which is Bethlehem. The death of these two women, Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, died, and then Rachel, Jacob's wife, died.
Now we saw how Jacob repented himself, and how his whole household repented.
And they made their way up to Bethel to pay their vows to God. And the moment the household repents, God rewards or meets that repentance in a quite marvelous way.
First of all, he protects his people. Jacob was living in fear of his enemies because of what had happened in Shechem when his sons had killed so many people. But the Lord put a special protection around Jacob and his sons.
[1:42] And then again in Bethel, God gives Jacob a vision of himself. He comes down and talks with him, perhaps in much the same way as God appeared in a human form to Abraham and spoke with him.

And then again in the same portion, God renews the promises of the covenant to Jacob. Now these are important things, simply because that in their essential details, they speak of a spiritual law which goes on and on in life, and that is this.
When we turn to the Lord, he turns towards us. Jacob and his household have hardly forsaken the idols and turned towards the living God. When he shows himself clearly, he renews his promise. They come with increasing sweetness, and he gives a protection so that God becomes the shield and the strength of his people. And if we don't know the Lord in these ways properly, and if we don't hear his promises, and if we can't take the sweetness of his word and the consolation of his truth, then what we need is repentance in our souls, and all these things will be then ours.
Now the strange thing here is that this great fellowship between Jacob and God at Bethel is again bracketed on either side by significant events.
[2:58] And it is bracketed really by two deaths, one on either side of Bethel. Before God meets Jacob at Bethel, we are told in verse 8 that Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, died.

And she was buried beneath or just before Bethel, underneath an oak. And the name of the oak tree was called the Oak of Weeping. And that tells us how bitterly the household of Jacob felt the death of this old woman.
But then hardly have they left Bethel. And before they enter into Bethlehem, we are told that Rachel, Jacob's wife, dies in verse 19.
And she is buried there by him just outside Bethlehem. Now as I say, these two tragedies or catastrophes stand on either side of this great encounter with God.
And is that not in itself again revealing a spiritual principle or a law of the spiritual life? And that's this, that the day of prosperity is set by God against the day of adversity.
[4:06] One is over against the other. Your trial prepares you for your blessing just as your blessing prepares you for your trial. And both are true. Both are true.

In the trial, God is opening your mouth wide. And in the blessing, he is filling it. And no doubt after a blessing, he has to give you some thorn in the flesh, lest you should be exalted above measure. And you'll find in your spiritual life that every blessing is preparatory to a trial. And you'll find that every trial is preparatory to a blessing. And the Lord indeed blesses all these things to the welfare of our souls.
And you'll notice that Jacob here, for example, raises two pillars. In verse 14, he raises a pillar. We're told that Jacob set up in a pillar, a pillar in the place where God talked with him, even a pillar

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of stone.
But then just further down in verse 20, we read that Jacob set a pillar upon her grave. That is the pillar of Rachel's grave. And to this day, a pillar of gladness and a pillar of sadness.
[5:11] And you put pillars on these things in your own mind also. And go back to them. And remember prosperity and adversity. And then put up an Ebenezer and say, thus far has the Lord helped me.

Or hitherto has the Lord helped me. Now I want to look at the death of these two women. Particularly, of course, the death of Rachel, Jacob's wife. But first of all, just want to notice the death of Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, in verse 8.
She died and she was buried under an oak tree. Now she's Rebecca's nurse. And you'll remember that Rebecca was the mother of Jacob.
Now when it says that she was Rebecca's nurse, the word nurse has nothing to do really with what we usually consider a nurse as today. A nurse really was perhaps some kind of nanny or something to that effect.
It was a woman who was charged with taking care of children in the family. Now she is only mentioned in one other verse in the scripture. So you have two verses all together.
[6:17] One other verse back in Genesis 24 and verse 59. And that is when Rebecca is leaving her own household as a young woman.

You remember how Abraham sent his servant Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac. And Eliezer met Rebecca at the well. And they went back to her parental home.
And in the morning, Rebecca was asked, will you go with this man? And Rebecca says, I will go with this man. She goes out, not knowing where she is going to inherit the land of promise.
But we're told that when she goes, that they sent her away. And they sent her away with her nurse with her. That's the only detail that we are given.
In verse 59, they sent her away and her nurse with Abraham's servant and his men. So that is the first and in fact the only other mention you have of her besides this mention in this chapter here.
[7:21] Now I suppose that raises the question, how did she end up with Jacob and Paddan Aram? And I think the probable answer is this. That after Jacob had been sent out of the family home, sometime afterwards Rebecca would have sent her own nurse back north to Paddan Aram where she came from to help Jacob with the raising of his children.

Because this woman was tried, she was trusted, she was spiritually exercised, she was an old woman and she would help to raise the children with the knowledge of the Lord.
And so it's more than likely that Rebecca sent this nurse back northwards into Paddan Aram. Now I said that's all we're told. But what we're told is remarkable in a sense.
Because when it says that this woman is Rebecca's nurse, that does not mean that Rebecca employed her as a nurse for her own children, that is Jacob and Esau.
What it means is that she actually nursed Rebecca herself. That's what the word means in the Hebrew. When Rebecca was born, this woman was already around about, let's say, 20 years of age.
[8:36] And so she'd have been considerably older when she went down with Rebecca, when Rebecca was marrying Isaac. In other words, this woman is approximately 170 years of age at this time.

Of course, there's a reason in the scripture for these long years. I don't want to go into that. I know a lot of people mock them. But that's due to an ignorance of the effect of the flood upon the world. The great cataclysmic flood reduced the ages of men and women just like that.
You'll notice that before the flood, when the earth was relatively pure and clean, people lived for many, many years. But as soon as the flood changed the world dramatically, you'll find that the age of the patriarchs begins to fall dramatically until it tapers down to about somewhere from 80 or 200 and so on.
This woman at this time, the time of her death, is around about 170 years old. Now, what does that mean? Well, it means this, that she has always been in the family of Jacob.
In fact, she has always been in the family of his mother and father, Rebecca and Isaac. Now, I have no doubt that Jacob knows by this time that his mother is dead and that she has been dead for some years.

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[9:47] And I have no doubt that he has mourned his mother greatly. And this woman was the only living link, as it were, all these years between himself and his own mother.

Deborah could tell him so many things and could speak of so many things with respect to his own mother, whom he loved so much and who loved him so much. After all, was Deborah not there when Rebecca herself was born?
Could she not tell him of his own mother's childhood? Could she not tell him of how, when he was born, that Esau was born first and he grasped the hill?
Could she not tell him so many of the things that he didn't know about the meeting between Rebecca and Isaac? So many things that had happened in the family home. This was his living link between himself and his mother.
And now, suddenly, just before God meets him, she is taken away. Is this not God opening Jacob's mouth so that God then will fill it? Ah, my friend, when God smites, he only smites with a view to bless.
[10:52] But the taking away of this woman was a bitter blow. And you'll notice that the oak under which she's buried is called by him the oak of weeping. Now, she's a servant in the house.

But the interesting thing is when two people are the Lord's people, then these relationships don't really matter. They exist. A servant honors his own position as servant, and he will honor the master's position as master, just as the master will honor the servant's position, and he'll honor his own.
But in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free. There is no Jew nor Greek. There is no male or female, for all are one in Christ Jesus. And the Christian bond unites through these other relationships of this world.
It sanctifies them, and it ennobles them, so that even a master and a slave are able to live together, as it were, in harmony and in peace. You know that slavery has been abolished for a long time in our own country, but in the United States it was abolished in the 1860s.
But it was quite interesting that when a lot of these slaves were emancipated, especially in states like Virginia and Carolina, these particularly godly states in the United States, it's interesting that a lot of the slaves there kept the name of their master.
[12:16] And that was an unusual thing, because most of the slaves were quite keen just to let go of their master's name. That was a surname they very quickly got rid of. But a strange thing in these states was that many slaves retained the name of their master.

Why? Because they loved their master. As Exodus 21 tells us, if the slave loves his master, then he's to be pierced to the doorpost, as a sign that he wants to serve his master, and he loves his master.
That's what Christianity did for those people. That's what Christianity did for the slaves, and what it did for the masters. Even within that relation there was a love, and that's why many, many years later, and even today, you can go to these states and find people who are black, thoroughly black, without a drop of white blood in them, and you find that they might be called McDonald, or something to that effect, because they never let go of the names of the Christian masters who loved them.
And even that relation of master and slave was ennobled, and it was made beautiful by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you not find that in Philemon and in Onesimus?
If you read the epistle of Philemon, you'll find that that's the case. That the grace of God makes all these relationships, beautiful ones, in his own sight.
[13:33] Now, I know we don't have slaves and masters today, but we do have Christian employers, and we do have Christian employees. And the grace of God should beautify that relationship as well.

For example, all of you who are employers should care for those whom you employ, and you should respect them, and you should pay them a decent wage, a wage to sustain themselves, and to sustain their families.
And you should not make overtaxing demands on their time, or on their energy, or anything of that kind. And those of you who are employees, the same is true.
There should be respect, and there should be contentment. And you should serve those who are your employers cheerfully and willingly, as 1 Peter tells us. If 1 Peter, if Peter can say that the slave should obey his master like that, how much more should the employee serve his employer like that?

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Cheerfully and willingly. Not stealing his time, and not stealing his money, which is theft. And which is a breach of the Ten Commandments. But that relationship should be honored.
[14:45] It's interesting that Deborah means a bee. That's what the name Deborah means. And I have no doubt that she was a busy woman, being a Christian servant. And the Puritans had a strange, and they had a marvelous way of putting things.

They said that every Christian should be like a bee. One of them said that a Christian should know how to be busy. He should know how to dispense honey, and when the time is right, to give a sting as well.
So every Christian should be a bee. But that describes, I'm sure, the way that this woman industriously worked. To the glory of God. I'm quite sure that was her utmost aim.
She worked to the glory of God in the station in which God put her. And that brings me to something else. Snobbery in the church is an ugly thing. It's ugly in national churches.
It's ugly in local churches. It's ugly everywhere. Snobbery. People judging people by the work they do, or by the station in life, or what school they came from, or whether or not they have degrees, or how many degrees they have.
[15:50] That is all ugly in the sight of God. May the grace of God teach us to recognize the worth of a person by what grace has made them, and not by these accidental things.

Does James not warn us against that? And I want to read you the passage. In James chapter 2. Notice how these things crept into the church fairly early.
James chapter 2. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons. If there come into your assembly, that's a Christian synagogue, that's what the word means.
If there comes into your Christian assembly a man with a gold ring in a goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place.
And you say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool. Are you not then partial in yourselves? Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him?
[17:04] You have despised the poor, he says. But is it not rich men who oppress you, and who draw you before the judgment seats? And are not they the ones which blaspheme that worthy name by which you are called?

Have no respect of persons. Have no respect of persons. And that is why the only distinction in seating that there has ever been, and we maintain this right, is the only distinction in the synagogue, where the elders of the church sat at the front of the synagogue.
In other places, it does not matter what a person's job is, or his background, or anything of that kind. This unity, and this oneness, is always to be maintained in the church of Christ.
And you see to it that you keep to it in your own fellowship, and in your own circles too. Don't just ask people round who are just like yourself, or who have the same kind of job, or what have you. Learn to respect all whom God have called, rich or poor, noble or not, to respect them all, for they are the Lord's. My friends, do you not think that John Knox was just as noble when he was rowing on the galley slave, when he was a prisoner, rowing away as a slave?
[18:18] Was he not as noble then as he was when he was the great reformer, preaching in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh? He was the same man, the same man. And may we learn to evaluate people like that, and not according to the things of this world.

So then Jacob honors Deborah, although she is just a nurse, as it were, in the home. And there's great weeping in the household when this great woman of God dies.
Now then, I want to move on secondly to the death of Rachel in verse 19. And Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephraim, which is Bethlehem.
And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave. Now, there had always been a close bond between Jacob and Rachel.
And that was the case ever since he met her at the well when he first set foot in Paddan Aram. He was drawn to Rachel. And although Laban tricked and deceived him and gave him Leah when he thought he was obtaining Rachel, Jacob's heart was always closer to Rachel than it was to Leah.
[19:35] But Rachel's womb was closed and the Lord opened Leah's womb. He opened Leah's womb. And Rachel envied her sister when she saw that her sister was bringing one child after another into the world.

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And perhaps you remember in chapter 30 how Rachel turned around one day to Jacob and she said, give me children or else I die. What foolish things we can say.
Give me children she said or else I die. And Jacob probably increasingly exasperated turns round and he says, am I God? He says, who have withheld the fruit of your womb from you.
It is not up to me. He says, it is in the hand of the Lord to open your womb. Then you'll notice what Rachel does. She does what we all do at times. She tries to bring the thing around in her own strength.
Chapter 30 and verse 14. And Reuben, now he was Leah's oldest son, and Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field and brought them unto his mother Leah.
[20:50] Now the mandrake was important because it was supposed to make a woman fertile.
Now you'll notice what Rachel says to her sister. Then Rachel said to Leah, give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

Now Leah turns, and you can notice the continual rivalry. Leah said to her, is it a small matter that you have taken my husband? Would you also take away my son's mandrakes?
And Rachel said, therefore he shall lie with thee tonight for thy son's mandrakes. And Jacob came out of the field in the evening and Leah went out to meet him and said, you must come in unto me for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes.
And he lay with her that night. And God harkened unto Leah and she conceived and bare Jacob a fifth son. Now, there's an interesting thing here.
This is Rachel putting her trust in herself or putting her trust in the mandrake. And what happens? Does God honor that?
[21:54] No, we're told that God opens Leah's womb, not Rachel's. He opens Leah's womb again for the fifth time. What is the Lord telling Rachel?

Well, he's telling her that the flesh profiteth nothing. He says, it's as though he is saying to her, you will never become fruitful, as it were, in your own strength. You can only be fruitful in my strength.
And this theme of fruit seems to come up all the time in these chapters. Even the word Ephraim means fruitfulness. There can be no fruitfulness in our Christian life, in our own scheming and in our own strength.
No reliance on worldly methods will ever advance us any degree. It is only a prayerful waiting upon the Lord that will make us fruitful. Only a prayerful waiting.
How many things have you tried yourself to advance your Christian life, I wonder. There's a lot of self-help books and how-to books that are out there that tell you that this method and that method will bring success in your life and it will bring success to a congregation and so on.
[22:59] When we know that the only thing that will bring fruitfulness from God is a reliance upon himself in prayer. And very often you will try anything but that.

But when the Lord opens Leah's woman again instead of opening Rachel's, Rachel is cast back upon the Lord and she turns to him then in earnest prayer.
And that's why in the same chapter, chapter 30 and verse 22, we read these great words, and God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her.
Now notice, that tells us that she had turned from the mandrakes to prayer. She had turned from these methods of the world she had turned into prayer. And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her and opened her womb, and she conceived and bare a son, and she said, God has taken away my reproach.
And you know when you try to be fruitful in your Christian life by anything other than the means of grace and the word and prayer, it brings hardness to your soul, it brings frustration, brings mental tiredness, depression, it brings all kinds of spiritual depression into your life.
[24:23] And the only thing my friend that can alleviate that is a genuine turning to the Lord. And if you do, the Lord will hearken to you and he will remember you.

He will remember you. And she calls her firstborn son Joseph, which means God will add to me another son.
Now, I have no doubt that when Jacob is leaving Bethel, that in spite of the fact that Deborah has died, there is a kind of spring in his step.
For this reason, he's going back to the family home. And although his mother has died, he's going back to the place where he will settle with his family and where God will bless him and he can again meet with his father.

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But he's hardly gone away from Bethel when Rachel begins to travail. Now, Jacob and Rachel, I'm sure, are looking forward to bringing another child into the world in the family home.
[25:27] But it's not to be. Because the labor quickly becomes a hard labor. And the midwife, in the midst of this labor, goes up to Rachel and she says, fear not, you shall have this son also.

But Rachel is conscious that her life is slipping away. And she calls the child Benoni or son of my sorrow.
That's what it means. But then Jacob steps in quickly and he calls him Benyamin or Benjamin as we have it here. Benyamin which means the son of my right hand or the son of gladness or the son of blessing.
Now, all these things are significant things. Let's take first of all, Rachel's weakness. Now, not only is she physically weak here, but I've no doubt, and we'll see that as we go on, I've no doubt that she's spiritually weak as well.
Her faith is being dealt a blow. And that is because she feels that she's about to give up the ghost, that she's about to die. And I've no doubt that she's concluding hard things against herself.
[26:40] as we very often do when circumstances like that come. We feel we have brought the thing upon ourselves. Our mind goes back onto the things that we have done and the things that we have said and we know that we deserve nothing else.

And her faith begins to become very, very low. And it's in that connection that the midwife comes in and she says in verse 17 of chapter 35 here, fear not, you shall have this son also.
Now, this woman is a good Christian woman. And how do we know that? Well, because she's taking the promises of God and she's bringing them back into the mind of a poor languishing Christian.
That's what she's doing. Fear not, you shall have this son also. What is she doing there? Well, she's going back to around about 17 years before when Joseph was born.
And Rachel was full of faith and she called him Joseph which means God will add to me another son. Now, at this point, Rachel is weak and she feels she is slipping away and perhaps she feels the child is lost and the midwife comes in and she essentially takes her and she says don't fear let me put into your mind what God gave you so many years ago that you will have another son also.
[28:12] God will add to you another son. Now, is that not what Jacob does as well? When Jacob hears the words Ben Oni my son of my sorrow he can't leave it like that.

He goes up to Rachel as it were and he says no that shall not be his name the child must be called Ben Yaman or the son of my right hand the son of gladness not the son of sorrow but the son of gladness why because God will turn this to good and I'm sure he is speaking to Rachel and he saying Rachel he says I don't know whether it is your portion to live or to die but don't give your son the name of sorrow because through your son gladness will come and gladness will come into the world and blessing will come into the world and Jacob is laying hold there of the great truth that all things work together for good to them who love God and who are called according to his purpose even if it's God's will for your soul to leave this world he will still do what you have done or work what you have done to good and he will bless it and the blessing of it will last and the blessing of it will prosper in the future and Jacob is encouraging
Rachel and he is strengthening her just as the midwife is doing now my friends may seem a very obvious thing to say but what you have there is Christian encouragement encouragement to a person who is in great need of it and what they are doing is bringing the word of God spoken in the past the promises of God and they're bringing them firmly before this woman in a hour of sorrow and in a hour of need how many there may be out there tonight or in this town or even within these walls who have great needs and great sorrows and that person should be going to see her or this person should be going to see her what about yourself everybody likes to talk about the ministry of God's people or the body ministry when it comes to preaching but nobody is so interested when it comes to the day to day nitty gritty of going to see those in need or those who might be cheered by a word from yourself what happens to the body ministry then how many houses do you go to yourself how many people do you see weak old infirm we always look at others and seldom look at ourselves in these matters seldom look at ourselves but it did
Rachel good and we'll see that in a moment I know we're not told it in this chapter here but I think scripture elsewhere tells us that the words which the midwife gave her and the words which Jacob gave her did good to this woman's soul all Jacob said in essence was that God will bless this and he'll make it good although it's sad for you that's all he said and as for the midwife she said

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remember that promise you had many years ago God will bring it to fruition and he'll cause it to come to pass that's all and we think we're so inadequate with our words many's a blessing you've got and many's a blessing I've got from that simple coming from the mouth of someone else perhaps he thought it wasn't worth saying some people are scared even of quoting the text all things work together for good in case it sounds like a cliche or something like that the word of God is not a cliche if you mean it like that and if you mean it sincerely then God will prepare the heart of the fellow who hears it to take it sincerely you know

I've heard some people saying oh that person came to me and only said all things work together for good I'm tired of hearing that well if you're tired of hearing that you have a problem you have a problem if it's said in the spirit receive it in the spirit and it may be blessed to you indeed it may be blessed to you indeed oh what a word and season does my friend to those who are weary and did Christ himself not say that in Isaiah 50 the Lord has given me the tongue of the learned that I may speak a word and season to them which are weary and he gave that tongue to Jacob and he gave that tongue to the midwife and it was a blessing to Rachel's soul and I ask the question do you think Rachel died in sorrow well we're only told here that she called him Benoni but his father called him Benjamin and Rachel died and Rachel died but if you go forward to Jeremiah chapter 31 and verse 15 now we read it together

[32:56] Jeremiah 31 and verse 15 there are strange verses here but I think that the spirit means us to take them in connection with what we have been looking at in Genesis Jeremiah 31 verse 15 let me just give you a little bit of the context here first in Jeremiah and the context is this that the tribes of Israel are taken away into captivity and there is great mourning women are mourning their husbands and their sons many of them slain most of them taken away into captivity and many of them feel that it is a hopeless time altogether it is a time of such blackness and despair that the nation can never rise again the church can never be blessed it is the end and it looks like the end and who often that has been true in the case of the church of

God that it looks like the end it looks like the finish of all things but verse 15 of chapter 31 thus saith the Lord a voice was heard in Rama lamentation and bitter weeping Rachel weeping for her children refusing to be comforted for her children now you notice in that refuse to be comforted for her children because they were not thus saith the Lord refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears for your work shall be rewarded and they shall come again from the land of the enemy and there is hope in thine end or in your future which is what the expression means there is hope in your future saith the Lord that thy children shall come again to their own border now the interesting thing is this when the tribes were gathered for captivity they were gathered in Rama outside

Bethlehem which is where the tomb of Rachel was and the prophet is envisaging that Rachel herself is weeping it's a figure it's a poetic figure that Rachel herself is weeping because her sons are taken captivity now in the northern kingdom of Israel they were taken captivity first two largest tribes were Ephraim and Manasseh you'll remember that they were the sons of Joseph who was the son of Rachel not of Leah so these two great tribes of the northern kingdom were Rachel's children in the southern tribes you had Judah and Benjamin and they became one as it were under David so again they are in a sense Rachel's children Benjamin and she seems to be weeping at the tomb because the tribes are lost and the tribes are dead and does that not take you back to what happened when she actually died she's weeping because she feels her son is lost the son of my sorrow but what does God say in the prophecy well he says in the prophecy this refrain your voice from weeping and refrain from tears for your work or your labor or your travail shall be rewarded and there is hope in your future says the

Lord your labor will be rewarded and there is hope in your future now is it too much for us to believe that we can put that back into the situation that took place in Genesis that that was the kind of message that Jacob and the midwife took to Rachel at first she refuses to be comforted because she feels it is a day of blackness and despair it's the end of all things and she feels that her sins have found her out and that there is no hope for herself and no hope for her child but the midwife comes with a promise and Jacob comes with a promise and what's the promise son of my gladness he says son of my right hand God will bless the future he says God will cause all this to turn out well and he can bring the most bitter things and cause them to work out sweetly in the life of a person and in the life of the church and is that not what Jacob said to her and just as God said in the prophecy refrain from weeping and refrain from tears are we not to believe that Rachel took this

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word from the midwife and that she took the word from
Jacob and that she crossed the Jordan with gladness in her heart with joy in her spirit because she knew that the Lord would bless this child and that he would stay alive my friends it's a remarkable thing but very often God's people are shaken before they die and strangely you find that those who are strongest in assurance become weakest on their deathbed and those weakest in assurance throughout their life become strongest on their deathbed but even you find with those who are weakest on their deathbed when they are looking for the Lord and they cannot find him very often and you read the biographies of the old saints very often you find that they open their eyes and sometimes they raise their hands and they say he is coming the Lord is coming or I can hear him or something to that effect and they cross the Jordan in that way is that not what happened to Rachel she was brought out of her sorrow by the word of promise because she knew that God blessed literally her labor and that
[38:41] God would bring good out of it and that Benjamin would be a blessing in the world there is hope in your future and her work would live on in Benjamin is that not a great thought when you bring children into the world anyway you who keep covenant and you who seek to bring children into a covenant keeping relationship with God is it not a great thought when you die yourself that God is able to do great things through your own seed and that perhaps the work which you have put in to the raising of those children may bring forth fruit at a later day there is hope in the future there might even be 70 years of captivity there might be 70 years of darkness but God will bring back the children to this place there is something else I feel that I should say too and that is this that this text in Jeremiah is quoted in the New Testament and in fact we looked at that about four or five Sabbath mornings ago when Herod went out to kill the young children in Bethlehem

Matthew says that when those children under two years old died he said a voice was heard in Ramah Rachel weeping for her children are these infants cut off at such an early age when they were still circling the breast because of the ruthlessness of Herod the image of Satan himself but what do you think yourselves do you think those children will be in glory why does Matthew quote that text because of the words which come after it refrain your voice from weeping and refrain your eyes from tears for your children shall return to the land is that not a glorious way of saying that those slain slaughtered and massacred children massacred by the tyrant in the name of Christ shall return and inherit Canaan they shall inherit the earth along with the meek who shall inherit the earth God's purposes are never defeated or frustrated but he always brings good out of evil Paul tells us that the woman shall be saved through childbearing 1st Timothy 6 or 1st Timothy 2 it is that the woman shall be saved through childbearing Rachel didn't seem to be saved through childbearing but that depends what you mean by saved the way I think we should understand that is this that it was part of the woman's curse that bringing children her greatest blessing and her greatest joy in the world should become the hardest and the most difficult thing in pain and in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children and when a woman have you noticed that you're aware that the woman's pains far exceed the pains of any other creature in this world in giving birth and that is because of sin the woman's pain is so great nevertheless
Paul says in spite of the fact that she is as it were carrying a curse in that pain she shall be saved through it if she continues in faith and holiness with sobriety Rachel was not saved through it in the sense that she lived through the process but she was saved through it in this sense that she was brought out of childbearing into the great presence of God who is to say that that is not being saved through childbearing is that not the highest sense of being saved through childbearing in spite of the pangs and the curse she goes home to be with God and the son that is born becomes a son of gladness and becomes a father of blessing the curse is a pain but God triumphs well then Jacob raises the pillar and he mourns I believe for Rachel to the end of his days even when he's blessing his children on his deathbed he mourns for Rachel but he comes to the family home and he meets his father for the first time in many many years and then we're told that Isaac dies 180 years old actually
Isaac dies sometime after Joseph has gone to Egypt I know that's not commonly thought but if you work out the ages you'll discover that Joseph had been sold a slave before Isaac died but the death of Isaac is included here as it were to bring his interest in matters to a close Jacob is now settled in the land he has 12 sons from Leah and from Rachel and from the two concubines and from these 12 foundation stones God is going to build the Old Testament church and to speak with reverence what a lot of work there is to be done Reuben shows what he's like he goes into his father's

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concubine that's a way of trying to get to ensure the birthright or try to ensure more for himself Simeon and Levi they're bloodthirsty in the next two chapters you'll see that Judah has no control over his life at all but the Lord will shape all these stones and the instrument that he will use to shape them is the second youngest
[44:09] Joseph whom the Lord uses to save his people may the Lord bless of meditation on his word let us pray we thank thee O Lord for the great blessings that thou has brought into the world and we pray that we might see that out of every bitter thing God brings good even when Samson slew the lion he was able to eat honey from the carcass we ask thee O Lord to give us hope faith and confidence even in the darkest hour and may we recognize with Rachel that our travail will be of good to the world for when Sam travailed she brought forth children for Christ's sake Amen Amen

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