

Genesis - Lesson 50

Genesis Chapter 50

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Memory verses for this week: **1Co 15:56** The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. **1Co 15:57** But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Introduction: We finish our study on the book of Genesis this week as we cover the burial of Jacob and the death of Joseph.

I. The Honour Paid to Jacob

Gen 50:1 *And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.*

Gen 50:2 *And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.*

Gen 50:3 *And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.*

Joseph was deeply moved by his father's death and there was a period of mourning for 70 days. We had record of Jacob's death in Gen. 49:33

Gen 49:33 *And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.*

When a loved one dies, we need to have a time of mourning to deal with the loss. Joseph and those Egyptians surrounding him mourned it says for threescore and ten days.

In verse 2, Joseph orders the physicians to do the embalming. It was the Egyptians who perfected the art of embalming long, long ago. The existence of Egyptian mummies are mute testimony to this fact. Not only did Joseph and his family grieve, but there was a time of public mourning.

Gen 50:4 *And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,*

Gen 50:5 *My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.*

Gen 50:6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

After the death of Jacob, Joseph pleads for a burial in Canaan. The request was made through official channels. It was likely improper for Joseph in his mourning clothes and condition to come into the presence of Pharaoh. He explains how he had to swear to his father that he would bury him in his homeland of Canaan. However the request was brought up to Pharaoh, he no doubt heard it and grants the request. Earlier in chapter 47 Joseph swears to do this for Jacob, and he again promised in last week's lesson in chapter 49.

Gen 47:29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: Gen 47:30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. Gen 47:31 And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

Gen 49:29 And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, Gen 49:30 In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace.

Gen 49:31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.

Gen 50:7 And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, Gen 50:8 And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. Gen 50:9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.

Verse 7 says that Joseph and his servants went up to bury Jacob in the land of Canaan. There was a procession of mourners as they left out of Goshen. Even the Egyptian officials attended as well as all of Jacob's family. Pharaoh sent not only his servants, but chariots and horsemen as an armed escort to protect Joseph and the family.

John Gill said this about the procession taking the body of Jacob back to Canaan.

Gen 50:7 **And Joseph went up to bury his father**,.... According to his request; having obtained leave of Pharaoh, and being desirous of paying his last respects, and doing his last office to so dear a parent, with all the honour and decency this service could be done with:

and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh; a great number of them, some must be left to wait upon him; who these were the next words explain:

the elders of his house: his senators and counselors, his courtiers and principal officers of state:

and all the elders of the land of Egypt; governors of provinces and cities, the chief officers, civil and military; all which was done by the orders of Pharaoh, out of respect to Joseph and his family, and to make the funeral procession grand and honourable.

Gen 50:10 *And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.*

Gen 50:11 *And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan.*

Gen 50:12 *And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them:*

Gen 50:13 *For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.*

Gen 50:14 *And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.*

They came first to the threshingfloor of Atad which was beyond Jordan. There were seven days of mourning at the threshing floor. It was an emotional scene that greatly impressed the Canaanites. And as promised to their father, the sons of Jacob fulfill Jacob's final request. After burying their father in the requested place of the cave in the field of Machpelah, they return to Egypt.

II. Joseph and His Brethren

Gen 50:15 *And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.*

Gen 50:16 *And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,*

Gen 50:17 *So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the*

trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.

Gen 50:18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

It is amazing how guilt and shame can work on a person. This is why we should live a good and Godly life where we do not have fear in our lives. The brothers had unfounded fear of Joseph. Knowing what they had done, they are certain that he would now retaliate against them for the evil done unto him. They wrongly believed that Jacob had restrained Joseph. They plead for forgiveness on the basis of the word of their father. (As Christians we do the same today.) Note their confession of sin.

With great fear, the brethren of Joseph, once more fall before him. Remember how bitterly they had opposed the idea of doing such a thing. Gen. 37:5-11

Gen 37:5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

Gen 37:6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

Gen 37:7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

Gen 37:8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

Gen 37:9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

Gen 37:10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

Gen 37:11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

Many times we confess our sin to God, but we don't let it go ourselves. Once confessed, we need to forget it and move forward.

1Co 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

1Jn 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

1Jn 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

If you have fear in your life, your love is not yet perfected. Not only do we need to seek God's forgiveness, but when we get it, we need to forget it and move forward for the cause of Christ. Paul told the church at Philippi to press forward to reach the high calling of God.

Php 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Php 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Php 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

If you are hauling around a ton of old sin baggage and bondage, you will never run fast and when any kind of race. Put it under the blood and be used of God.

Matthew Henry said this about the guilt the brothers continued to have:

We have here the settling of a good correspondence between Joseph and his brethren, now that their father was dead. Joseph was at court, in the royal city; his brethren were in Goshen, remote in the country; yet the keeping up of a good understanding, and a good affection, between them, would be both his honour and their interest. Note, When Providence has removed the parents by death, the best methods ought to be taken, not only for the preventing of quarrels among the children (which often happen about the dividing of the estate), but for the preserving of acquaintance and love, that unity may continue even when that centre of unity is taken away.

- I. Joseph's brethren humbly make their court to him for his favour. 1. They began to be jealous of Joseph, not that he had given them any cause to be so, but the consciousness of guilt, and of their own inability in such a case to forgive and forget, made them suspicious of the sincerity and constancy of Joseph's favour (Gen 50:15): *Joseph will peradventure hate us*. While their father lived, they thought themselves safe under his shadow; but now that he was dead they feared the worst from Joseph. Note, A guilty conscience exposes men to continual frights, even where no fear is, and makes them suspicious of every body, as Cain, Gen 4:14. Those that would be fearless must keep themselves guiltless. If our heart reproach us not, then have we confidence both towards God and man. 2. They humbled themselves before him, confessed their fault, and begged his pardon.

Gen 50:19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

Gen 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Gen 50:21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

I love these verses. Joseph knew he was but a man and certainly not in the place of God to perform judgment. Joseph displays his total well-founded forgiveness.

I think the fact that the brothers still feared him touched his heart. Joseph's weeping indicates his forgiveness. He held no ill will towards any of them, and knew that God had forgiven them. Joseph's belief in God's sovereignty reinforced his forgiveness. When things don't go your way, do you graciously accept it like Joseph did, or do you find fault in negative things.

We grow a whole lot more in our testings than we do in the days full of joy and blessings. Joseph does not deny their evil intent, but this was overshadowed by the good intent of God. Remember how God works all things after His own counsel to make it good for us.

Rom 8:24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

Rom 8:25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Rom 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Rom 8:27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I've said this again and again, but it is crucial for a Christian to understand that verse 28 doesn't say all things are good that happen to us, but God makes ALL THINGS work together for our good. Have an illness, let God have the glory. Lose your job, trust God to make it all right. Lose a family member - have confidence if they were saved you will see them again one day. God sure worked it all to good in Joseph's life, and he will in every child of God who truly trusts him.

Joseph had not only forgiven them, but he also promises to take care of them in verse 21. He handled the whole problem with the utmost kindness.

III. The Death of Joseph

Gen 50:22 And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.

Gen 50:23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees.

Like Jacob, Joseph had a long and blessed life. He lived for 110 years. Notice how the span of human life was continually shortening. Isaac lived to be 180, Jacob 147, and Joseph 110. He lived to see the grandchildren of Ephraim according to verse 23. He lived to hold the grandchildren of Manasseh on his knees. Children and grandchildren are a heritage from the Lord.

Gen 50:24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Gen 50:25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

Gen 50:26 So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Like his father, Joseph has a dying request. Over 50 years had intervened between v. 21 and v. 22, but neither time, labor, nor joy could shake the faith of Joseph in God's eventual deliverance of His people. Though Joseph was dying, he knew the promises of God were sure.

He evidenced his faith by the request for his bones to be kept and taken to Canaan.

Heb 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Joseph was initially embalmed and buried in Egypt. We find that eventually the children of Israel honored Joseph's request.

Exo 13:19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

Jos 24:32 And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

Genesis begins with the creation in all its beauty and perfection; but ends with "a coffin in Egypt." Only one word is needed to describe the reason for the vast change, and it is

"SIN."

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.