

# The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture

## Week 19: Joseph's Final Assessment

### Scripture:

Genesis 50

### Motivation (Why You Need This):

#### *The road we've traveled in Joseph's story...*

- **Family dysfunction** - family was fractured by favoritism, jealousy, and hatred
- **Betrayal** - his own brothers sold him into slavery
- **Exile** - he was taken away from the promised land into Egypt
- **Injustice** - he was falsely accused and imprisoned
- **Delay** - he was forgotten in prison
- **Elevation** - God raised him to power in Egypt
- **Preservation** - through Joseph, God kept Jacob's family alive
- **Blessing to nations** - Egypt and surrounding peoples were fed through him

Joseph's story is Genesis 12 under a microscope.

God promised Abraham (200 years earlier) a land, nation, and that his descendants would be a blessing to the nations.

Genesis, so far, has shown those promises threatened by family dysfunction, famine, hatred, betrayal, exile, and guilt.

But by Genesis 50, how is Joseph feeling about this? He was 17 years old when he was sold into slavery and decades of his life were spent away from his family.

Would he become bitter, or be able to see the bigger picture God had been building?

### Information (What You Need to Know):

#### *God's work in the middle of the mess...*

- **God was unfolding His promises**
    - ✓ The nation was forming
- Genesis 46:3 (ESV)** Then he said, "...Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation.

- ✓ Now Jacob was dead, but Joseph returned to bury him in Canaan

**Genesis 50:7 (ESV)** So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, **8** as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen.

“This was Joseph's first time back in Canaan in 39 years (Egypt 22 years before Jacob moved there and Jacob had lived there 17 years).” – Bible Knowledge Commentary

- ✓ The place where they buried Jacob was important

**Genesis 50:13 (ESV)** ...for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah...which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place.

“Israel's first foothold in the promised land was not a house. It was a grave. Not a city, but a cemetery. Before God's people planted crops in Canaan, they buried their fathers there. And those bones reminded them of God's promise that He would give them a land.”

## ■ **God took what was meant for evil and used it for good**

- ✓ Joseph's brothers were concerned that he would take revenge now that their father was dead

**Genesis 50:15 (ESV)** When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.” **16** So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died: **17** ‘Say to Joseph, “Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.”’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.”

- ✓ Joseph assures them that he'll take care of them

**Genesis 50:19 (ESV)** But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? **20** As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. **21** So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

- Joseph knew he was right where he should be
- God had used their evil for good
- Joseph comforted them and promised to provide for them

- God didn't let Joseph see all of His promises fulfilled

**Genesis 50:24 (ESV)** And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, 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." **25** Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." **26** So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

- God's blessing isn't with one, single person ("*God will visit you...*")
- God's promises will continue ("*you shall carry up my bones from here*")
- God's work isn't overnight but over time ("*he was put in a coffin in Egypt*")

### **Application (What You Need to Do):**

After nineteen weeks in Joseph's story, we are not meant to walk away merely impressed by Joseph. We are meant to walk away trusting Joseph's God.

At almost every point, it looked like his life was falling apart.

But Genesis 50 shows us God was building something Joseph could not yet see.

*He was building...*

- Humility in the pit
- Faithfulness in Potiphar's house
- Endurance in prison
- Wisdom through delay
- Reconciliation through pain
- Preservation through suffering

So, the question is: **Can we trust God when we cannot see the bigger picture?**

Joseph says, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."

Our mind must go to the cross where Jesus suffered and died for our sins.

At the cross, men meant evil against Jesus; God meant it for salvation. The God of Joseph is the God of the cross. He keeps His promises. He preserves His people. He redeems what others ruin.