

We are finishing the book of Genesis today, Chapter 50. And as we read these closing verses, we see the transition from one generation of faith to the next. It's a beautiful reminder that while the servants of God pass away, the work of God continues.

A Faith That Looks Beyond the Grave

As the chapter opens, we see Joseph mourning his father, Jacob. Joseph commands the physicians to embalm him—a process that took forty days—and the Egyptians mourned for him for seventy days. Now, that's a significant tribute! It shows the respect Joseph had earned in that land.

Jacob had made Joseph swear to bury him back in the land of Canaan, in the cave of Machpelah. Even though they were living in the prosperity of Egypt, Jacob's heart was in the Promised Land. By faith, he wanted his resting place to be in the land God had promised to Abraham and Isaac.

You know, we sometimes make a very big fuss over "the old tent"—this physical body. But the Bible tells us in Second Corinthians chapter 5, verse 1, that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. When a believer dies, the spirit departs to be with the Lord, and what is left is just the shell. While we grieve—and there is nothing wrong with grieving, for we miss those we love—we don't grieve as those who have no hope.

Sovereignty and Grace

After Jacob is buried, Joseph's brothers get hit with a wave of fear. They think, "Now that Dad is gone, Joseph is going to get even with us for what we did to him." They actually concoct a story, claiming Jacob left instructions for Joseph to forgive them.

But look at Joseph's response in Genesis chapter 50, verse 19. He wept, and he said to them:

"Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God?"

This is the secret to Joseph's life. He realized that judgment belongs to the Lord. He didn't waste his life seeking revenge or living in bitterness. He understood that God is the Judge.

Then we see one of the most powerful declarations in all of Scripture in verse 20:

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God intended it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save many people alive."

What a perspective! His brothers had a "malicious intent," but God had a "gracious intent." God is so big that He can take the bridge that the enemy meant for your destruction and turn it into the path for your promotion. He takes the "wrath of man" and makes it "praise His name," as Psalm 76, verse 10 says.

The Hope of the Visitation

The book ends with the death of Joseph at one hundred and ten years old. But before he dies, he makes the children of Israel take an oath. He says in verse 24:

"I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

Joseph knew he was a stranger and a pilgrim in Egypt. He told them, "When God visits you—and He will—carry my bones up from here." He didn't want to be left in Egypt forever. He wanted to be part of the future God had for His people.

Practical Application for the Believer

Are you holding onto a grudge today? Are you living in the "what ifs" of the past? Joseph's life teaches us to trust the sovereignty of God. If you are walking with the Lord, nothing can touch your life that hasn't first passed through His hands of love.

The Challenge: I challenge you this week to stop trying to be the judge. Stop trying to defend yourself against every critic. Leave your reputation and your vindication in the hands of the Lord. Instead of focusing on the "evil meant against you," start looking for the "good God is bringing out of it."

An Invitation to Life

Perhaps you don't have that kind of peace. You're worried about the future, or you're carrying the weight of past sins.

Joseph's brothers were forgiven because of Joseph's grace, but you can be forgiven because of God's ultimate Grace. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to this earth. He lived a perfect life, and then He did something incredible: He shed His blood on the cross to pay for your sins. He took the judgment you deserved so that you could receive the mercy you don't deserve.

And He didn't stay in the grave! The resurrection of Jesus Christ declares to the entire universe that He is God, Savior, and Lord. Today, He is knocking on the door of your heart. He wants to move you out of the "Egypt" of this world and into the "Promised Land" of His kingdom.

If you want to know Him, simply turn from your way and trust in His finished work. Ask Him to be your Lord and Savior today.

"that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)