

The Book of Genesis

Chapter Fifty

The Death of Joseph - The End of an Era

Lesson Verse:

I. Lesson Introduction

- A. *Genesis 50* is divided into two lessons.
1. The first portion of the chapter deals with the _____ of Jacob.
 2. The second portion is a lesson on _____.
- B. *Genesis 49* ends with Jacob dying after he blessed his sons.
- C. *Genesis 50* begins with Joseph mourning for his father. By the time these event transpired, the famine has been over for 12 years. But the memories of the hurt caused by Joseph's brothers lived on and needed to be healed!
- D. The natural question remains unanswered: Why did the nation remain in Egypt after the famine was over and after the death of Jacob and Joseph? They had a homeland. They were only to sojourn in Egypt. They were not supposed to dwell there. Was it because of the position of Joseph? Was it because Jacob was too old to make the journey back home? Did they lack a leader to take them back home? Was it because Jacob had not allowed them to have their freedom for so long that they did not know how to make a decision? Why did the nation come back into Egypt once they arrived in Canaan to bury Jacob?
- E. The only scriptural answer we have is the prophecy made to Abraham that the nation would be in bondage for 400 years, *Gen 15:13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; God left them there so that He could magnify Himself to the world. Israel looked at these years as bondage. God looked at them as an opportunity.*
- F. Simple Outline:
1. The Death and Burial of Jacob (50:1-13)
 2. Joseph Confirms His Forgiveness of His Brothers (50:14-21)
 3. Joseph Dies in Egypt (50:22-26)

II. Study Lesson

A. **The Death and Burial of Jacob, *Gen. 49:33 - 50:1-14.***

1. The Mourning of Jacob's Death.
 - a. It is _____ to mourn the dead.
 - 1) The best way to deal with a loss of a loved one is to mourn for them. Death leaves a gaping spiritual wound in our souls. Just as it is natural to shed tears and cry because of physical pain, even so it is natural to cry over a spiritual wound as well.
 - 2) There are three stages of mourning that each of us must go through when we experience the loss of a loved one. Until we go all the way through these three stages, we do not begin to heal.
 - a) The immediate grief and anguish that survivors experience directly after a loved one's death is unique to the one suffering. Although there are many emotions, no emotion ranks as more intense than the emotion suffered by a person who has lost a loved one. Copied.
 - b) There are usually two ways people deal with death. The first way causes them to "retreat" from the reality of the situation. Often, those individuals don't cry, they don't talk, and they don't desire to spend time with the loved one's dead body. How many times have I heard someone say "I just want to remember them alive."
 - c) In my own personal opinion - based on personal observations - in order for a person to recover quickly from the grief associated with a death incident, they must recognize and accept the fact that the loved one is dead. They must come face-to-face with the truth.
 - b. The mourning should not consume the life of the living.
 - 1) Far too often there are those that make the death of their loved one a way for them to get attention. These types of folks have the attributes of the Pharisees for they believe that their mourning is a sure outward sign of the love within.

- 2) Then there are those who hang around those mourning so that they can see what is going on so they can have something to talk about. These folks were just as active in the days of the Lord as they are today. The example is found in the account of the death of Lazarus, *John 11*. There were folks there that were supposed to be comforting the sisters over their loss. However, if one examines the context of *John 11*, it comes to mind that those that were supposed to be comforting were more in the way than anything.
 - 3) We know this because there was crying and mourning by all those present, including the Lord. If the friends of Lazarus were doing such a great job in comforting the sisters, why all the crying? There was so much gloom there that it made the Lord cry as well. He cried not because of His love for Lazarus and that Lazarus was dead. The Lord knew where Lazarus was. He could visit Lazarus if He so desired. Why did Jesus weep in the presence of these people? He wept because no one believed Him when He said He was the resurrection and that Lazarus would live.
 - 4) We need to mourn the death of our loved ones. It is as healthy as visiting their dead bodies. However, we must allow the healing to begin. Every wound leaves a scar, whether it be physical or emotional. As long as we continue to scratch the wound it will never heal.
2. The Burial of Jacob.
 - a. Egyptian Embalming – not a pretty sight! The removal of the brain, and the internal organs, soaking the body and organs in special spices, and natrum salts
 - b. Joseph carried Jacob to Canaan and buried him with his fathers. The funeral procession must have been great for those that lived in the area were amazed at the leaders that attended the burial
 3. Coming to the Threshing Floor of Atad (10). – on the edge of the Promised Land

B. Joseph _____ His _____ of His Brothers (50:14-21)

1. What makes the ending of this chapter so powerful is how after all these years and all that Joseph has done for his brothers, they still do not believe that he actually forgave their trespass.
2. The Brothers And Their Fear (19).
 - a. The reason why the brothers had fear was because they did not believe that Joseph had actually forgiven them. The Bible does not say this directly, rather it is implied in the words of Joseph as found in v. 20.
 - b. Just as recovering from the loss of loved one has healing stages that must be passed through, even so restoring a relationship has stages of forgiveness before restoration is obtained. The biggest problem to overcome is first realizing we made a mistake and wronged another. That alone is difficult for some, if not impossible. There is something inherent in man that hinders him from admitting he made a mistake. This same inherent flaw prevents man from humbling his heart and saying I was wrong. Few it is that can say as King David, "I have sinned!" *2 Sam. 12:13*.
 - c. After we have wronged someone, we will never know peace until we pass through all the stages of forgiveness. The simplest path to take is to continue along our merry way, even after we were told we offended someone, as though we never did anything wrong. It is much easier to continually tell ourselves and anyone that will listen that we are not the ones with a problem. This is the very thing Satan loves to see someone cling to as long as they live. As long as someone believes they have not wronged anyone, that person is useless in the service for the Kingdom of God.
 - d. This is the very place that these ten brothers find themselves. For all these many years, the brothers have denied they were at fault. They refused to pass through the stages of forgiveness. They do not even believe that Joseph has forgiven them.
 - e. Woe is the person who fails to pass through the three stages of forgiveness of asking God to forgive, asking the one sinned against to forgive, and forgiving self for being the fool. The person who refuses to pass through all these stages is one who will not be comforted or nurtured by the Lord or the one offended.
3. Did the brothers ask _____ to forgive them?
 - a. The Bible does not say that the brothers ever asked God to forgive them. This is one of the phases of forgiveness: ask God to forgive us, *1 John 1:9*. Our Lord is the Lord of His word. He will forgive if we confess and forsake, *Psalms 66:18*. Why would the brothers not ask God to forgive them? Everyone they lied to knew Joseph was not killed by a wild beast as they told many years ago. They have nothing to hide. Their sin was made public.
 - b. There is no need in us coming down hard on these siblings when we do the very same things. We harden our hearts and refuse to ask God to forgive us. What we really would prefer is to ignore the sin and maybe it will go away. We lie to self and say that God has so much going on

- that He will forget about that lie I told, that dollar I stole, those lustful intentions that drag me down, or that evil tongue of mine. There are far greater sins for God to deal with than these little ones of mine.
- c. It is obvious that the brothers did not ask God to forgive them. Sad it is that there are many in churches all over the world that are saved, but will not ask God to forgive them for their trespasses against another brother or sister within the church body.
4. The brothers did not believe Joseph had forgiven them.
 - a. The second stage of forgiveness is asking the one we offended to forgive us and then accepting their word that they have forgiven. These brothers lived under the blessings of Joseph for the past 12 years and did not bother to ask him to forgive them. That was why they believed Joseph would now punish them since their father was dead. The brothers were judging Joseph by their standards. They had something hanging over their heads and believed the same about Joseph.
 - b. These first two phases of forgiveness find the brothers of Joseph severely lacking. It is no wonder they lived in fear. ***1 John 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.***
 - c. Ever wonder why our conscience bothers us when we sin? It is because of fear; fear of punishment for we know we have committed a wrong. Fear has torment. Joseph did not want torment in his life and that is probably the reason why he mourned for his father at Atad's threshing floor. It is much easier to thresh the sin out of our lives than it is to live in fear and torment. (Do we say we love God and then fear what He might do in our lives? Is that really love?)
 - d. If we are not lying to self about the forgetfulness of God, we deceive our selves into believing that if we begin talking and hugging and smiling to those we wronged they will just accept us. We seem to think that we can smooth things over with some kind words and that soon the relationship will be as it once was.
 - e. Nothing is farther from the truth. There is still sin between self and the one we sinned against. There is still sin between self and God. Relationships will not grow until the sin is removed. It is up to the one that sinned to make the first move at getting the sin out of the way. That first move is a verbal apology. John the Baptist called it fruits meet for repentance, *Mat 3:8*. What that means is we tell the one we offended we are sorry and then we prove it with our deeds. The verbal apology comes first. Then the sweet words.
 - f. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Reckon he was trying to smooth things over? How about what Jacob did to Esau when they met after being separated for twenty years? Instead of Jacob apologizing to Esau for stealing the blessing, he sent gifts of animal. He used smooth words. He did everything but apologize. Was their relationship restored? No. Why do we believe we are different and that God has a separate set of rules for us?
 - g. Once we go to the one we offended and tell them we are sorry, it is then up to them to accept our apology. Once they acknowledge their acceptance, it is then our responsibility to take them at their words just as they took ours. If they refuse to accept our apology, our hands are clean before God. The brothers of Joseph never got this far.
 5. They Had not allowed God to forgive them.
 - a. After we have passed through the first two stages of forgiveness we must come to understand the third stage. Here we find the brothers of Joseph just as wrong in this third stage of forgiveness as they were at the first two. The third stage or phase is forgiving self for being a fool.
 - b. No one with any pride should desire to be the fool. King Saul told David that he had played the fool, ***1 Sam 26:21***. He asked David to forgive him, but no where is it ever hinted that King Saul forgave himself for wasting his kingship by hunting down a lowly shepherd boy with the armies of Israel.
 - c. Regardless of how little or much pride we have, sin and Satan will make a fool of us at every opportunity. Once these two make us into a fool, it is difficult to apologize to the ones we sinned against. It is almost impossible to hold our heads up in public or to our friends. Why is this? It is because until we pass through all three phases of forgiveness, we think that each time we meet those we wronged, they are talking about us and what we did or said.
 - d. Our mind's play deceptive tricks on us. Satan knows this and he will use it against us. Ever wonder why some folks after going through an argument and asking God to forgive them and asking the one they sinned against to forgive them will then drop out of church? If the truth is known, it is because they have not forgiven themselves and do not believe the others have forgiven them and they are ashamed. Satan keeps them defeated because they did not reach out by faith and accept the apology offered. They did not forget and press forward, ***Phil 3:12-13***.

6. Joseph's Constant Forgiveness.

- a. God has done all He is going to do. He said He would forgive if we would ask. Once we do what God told us to do when we offend we have done all we can do. We cannot make those we sinned against forgive us even after we humbly ask them. If they truly want to restore the relationship, they will forgive even as we ask. We then begin restoring the relationship. If they do not forgive, they were not our friends at all and now they may well owe us an apology for lying.
- b. We can forgive self once we obtain forgiveness from God and those we harmed. We know God will forgive once we confess and forsake. Whether the person wronged will forgive is not our decision to make. However, it is only after we pass through those first two stages that we can say we have done all that was required. Satan now has nothing to throw up to us. This is when we cling to the authority of the word God and stand forgiven in the eyes of God for doing what He required. This is how we defeat the shame that Satan uses on us for being the fool.
- c. With the brothers failing to go through all three stages of forgiveness it is no wonder they feared Joseph. Thus they begin to communicate among themselves that with the death of their father nothing will prevent them for suffering for their evil motives against their brother. Hence they sent a messenger to Joseph, telling him that he must remember the words of their father and forgive them. If they were truly interested in obtaining his forgiveness why did they not come to him in person? They did not come to him out of love. What they did was come to him in fear for their lives

7. Joseph's Words Of Strength (20-21).

- a. The brothers meant evil against Joseph but God meant it for good. God has a plan for each of us. Regardless of what the world and Satan may throw at us, if we will just stay near unto Him, He will turn the events in our lives into a blessing
- b. *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.* He did it for Joseph. He does not change. He will do it for us as well.

C. Joseph Dies in _____ (50:22-26)

1. Joseph comforts his brothers (21).

- a. Notice once again how we are reminded that the greatest type of the Lord Jesus nourished his brothers. Furthermore he comforted them with kind words.
- b. What a beautiful picture of the Lord comforting us after we have sinned and asked His forgiveness. He nourishes us with kind words. He soothes our fears. Even in times of trouble He gives us comforts, **2 Cor 1:3-4**.
- c. Why then, is it difficult for us to give encouraging words of comfort to those that has sinned against us? Is there anything more refreshing to the soul than to be comforted by the one that has forgiven us? The reason why is we do not want to open self up for we fear that we might be hurt again.
- d. It takes faith to enter into this comfort, *Luke 8:48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.* It comes only by passing through all the stages of forgiveness. It takes courage and faith to extend comfort to those we sinned against. It takes faith and courage to receive comfort from those that sinned against us.
- e. Once we enter into this comfort by faith we also pass unto a unity of one accord, **Phil 2:1-2**. This is not a unity of Saviour and sinner. Rather this is a oneness of restored fellowship. This comfort by faith into unity is a must for the household of faith, that is the church. If the church is to go forward, brothers and sisters in the church body must by faith comfort one another so that unity of mind and body be restored. We must allow self to be comforted as well. We must nourish each other with kind words.
- f. That was what Joseph did to his brothers. This was the same brothers that tried to kill him. This was the same brothers that lied about him. Yet look at what he did for them. He made himself vulnerable to those of his blood once again. I believe his brothers repented for their evil intentions against him. I believe he accepted their repentance.
- g. How much more should brothers and sisters within the church body comfort one another for they are made siblings by the blood of Jesus? Joseph and his brothers entered into a fellowship of unity.

2. Joseph Commands his Brothers – “Carry my bones home.”

- a. Joseph lived to see his great-great-grand children. Thus ends the life of the greatest type of the Lord Jesus in recorded history. Joseph received a pledge from his brothers that they would carry

his bones back to Canaan when God visited His people (25. The descendants remembered their vows and took them back, *Josh 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.*

3. Chapter 50 closes with the death of Joseph at the age of 110 years.
4. He, like Jacob was embalmed in Egypt – with the body waiting to be carried “home.”

III. Conclusion and Study Questions