

## Genesis Chapter 50 - Commentary By Mike Wells

### Overview of Genesis 50:

The book of Genesis concludes with (1) the burial of Jacob in verses 1-14; Joseph's brother then seek pardon in verses 15-21; and (3) we see Joseph's death in verses 22-26.

***Genesis 50 : 1-14 - 1 And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. 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. 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, 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. 6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear. 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, 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. 9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. 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. 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. 12 And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: 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. 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.***

- Joseph was obviously greatly saddened at his father Jacob's death.
- He always considered himself more a son of Jacob and less a dignitary in Pharaoh's court.
- We also see the Egyptian custom of seventy days of mourning.
- Joseph then requested permission of Pharaoh to take his father back to Canaan for burial as he had promised.
- Pharaoh's love and respect for Joseph is once again demonstrated as he allowed not only Joseph, but his brothers, "***and all the elders of the land of Egypt went as a very great company***" of chariots and horsemen to Canaan.
- Pharaoh sent some of his dignitary's with him also.
- Joseph buried Jacob his father in the cave where Abraham and Isaac were buried.
- He then returned to Egypt (I bet he wanted to stay there in God's promised land)
- But He did return and so did his brothers as they were destined to do (Gen 15:13)

- **Genesis 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;***

**Genesis 50 : 15-21 - *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. 16 And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, 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. 18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. 19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? 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. 21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them***

- We see here again the power of the human conscience, and the long-lasting sting of guilt.
- This sense of guilt even after all this time is still there.
- The men were now up there in years, and yet still fully remember and feel guilty about those early sins to their brother.
- The brothers somehow got the idea that Joseph's restraint in punishing them was solely due to the presence of their father Jacob.
- For the first time, it is recorded that they asked for Joseph's forgiveness, although it was made through a middle man (a messenger).
- So they invented fictional instructions that their father Jacob had commanded Joseph to forgive his brothers before they died.
- There is no record that Jacob was ever told that the brothers had sold them Joseph into slavery in the first place.
- God's Word does not record that and many theologians believe that Jacob never knew
- Whether he knew or not it certainly was not recorded that he ordered Joseph to forgive his brothers (As if Joseph hadn't already generously demonstrated his forgiveness several times already)
- Joseph's true feelings could be seen in his reaction to their message: ***And Joseph wept when they spake unto him*** (vs. 17).
- Joseph once again showed his character in forgiving them and saying that God had ordained all which had come to pass years earlier.
- Note that Joseph gives two bases for his forgiveness:
- ***Am I in the place of God?*** - As far as Joseph was concerned, it is God's place to deal with sin
- ***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***
- He understood how God had caused all things to work together for good for His people to bring greater good and deliver them at the end.
- The story of Joseph is a wonderful illustration of Romans 8:28.

- **Romans 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.*
- Joseph continued to provide for his brothers after the death of his father.

**Genesis 50 : 22-26** - *22 And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. 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. 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. 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. 26 So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.*

- Here we have a summary of the rest of Joseph's life.
- He appears to have lived the last seventy or so years of his life in peace and tranquility... which I am sure was fine with him, given the turmoil of the first forty years of his life!
- Although Joseph lived in peace in Egypt, and although he was a respected and prosperous man in Egypt, he still looked ahead to the time when his people would return to the promised land:
- It is evident from his dying plea, that he had not allowed himself to be so immersed with the politics, or the pleasures of all his prosperity in Egypt to forget the promised land of God for his descendants.
- Even though he was to be put in a coffin in Egypt he wanted his bones carried to the promise land someday when his people were brought out of the impending bondage.
- Joseph looked ahead to the time when God would lead His people out of Egypt.
- In Hebrews 11, the great faith chapter which lists the great acts of faith in the Old Testament, Joseph is remembered for these death-bed instructions: ***By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.*** (Heb. 11:22).
- Joseph had his eyes on the future and on what God would do for His people in the future, and about how God would accomplish His purposes in the future, just as He accomplished His purposes throughout Joseph's life.
- The presence of Joseph's coffin, with his bones inside, was to be a constant reminder to the children of Israel of God's promises that they would return to the Promised Land.
- These instructions of Joseph were carried out, hundreds of years later.
- When the Israelites left Egypt, ***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*** (Ex. 13:19).
- Then, after they had settled in the promised land, ***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.*** (Josh. 24:32).
- The book of Genesis concludes with the final days of Joseph, living to be 110 years old.
- It is appointed unto man once to die.