

# **Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**

## **Bible Study Notes**

**5-6-20**

### **Genesis 50**

#### **Joseph Buries His Father - Verses 1-11**

<sup>1</sup>Joseph threw himself on his father and wept over him and kissed him. <sup>2</sup>Then Joseph directed the physicians in his service to embalm his father Israel. So the physicians embalmed him, <sup>3</sup>taking a full forty days, for that was the time required for embalming. And the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days. <sup>4</sup>When the days of mourning had passed, Joseph said to Pharaoh's court, "If I have found favor in your eyes, speak to Pharaoh for me. Tell him, <sup>5</sup>'My father made me swear an oath and said, "I am about to die; bury me in the tomb I dug for myself in the land of Canaan." Now let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.'" <sup>6</sup>Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear to do." <sup>7</sup>So Joseph went up to bury his father. All Pharaoh's officials accompanied him—the dignitaries of his court and all the dignitaries of Egypt <sup>8</sup>besides all the members of Joseph's household and his brothers and those belonging to his father's household. Only their children and their flocks and herds were left in Goshen. <sup>9</sup>Chariots and horsemen also went up with him. It was a very large company. <sup>10</sup>When they reached the threshing floor of Atad, near the Jordan, they lamented loudly and bitterly; and there Joseph observed a seven-day period of mourning for his father. <sup>11</sup>When the Canaanites who lived there saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "The Egyptians are holding a solemn ceremony of mourning." That is why that place near the Jordan is called Abel Mizraim.

**50:1** When Jacob died at the age of 147, Joseph wept and mourned for months. When someone close to us dies, we need a long period of time to work through our grief. Crying and sharing our feelings with others helps us recover and go on with life. Allow yourself and others the freedom to grieve over the loss of a loved one, and give yourself time enough to complete your grieving process.

**50:2-3** Embalming was typical for Egyptians but unusual for nomadic shepherds. Believing that the dead went to the next world in their physical bodies, the Egyptians embalmed bodies to preserve them so they could function in the world to come. Jacob's family allowed him to be embalmed as a sign of courtesy and respect to the Egyptians.

**50:5** Joseph had proven himself trustworthy as Pharaoh's adviser. Because of his good record, Pharaoh had little doubt that he would return to Egypt as promised after burying his father in Canaan. Privileges and freedom often result when we have demonstrated our trustworthiness. Since trust must be built gradually over time, take every opportunity to prove your reliability even in minor matters.

#### **Joseph Buries His Father - Verses 12-14**

<sup>12</sup>So Jacob's sons did as he had commanded them: <sup>13</sup>They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had

bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite. <sup>14</sup> After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father.

**50:12-13** Abraham had purchased the cave in the field of Machpelah as a burial place for his wife, Sarah (23:1-9). It was to be a burial place for his entire family. Jacob was Abraham's grandson, and Jacob's sons returned to Canaan to bury him in this cave along with Abraham and Isaac. Their desire to be buried in this cave expressed their faith in God's promise to give their descendants the land of Canaan.

### **Joseph Reassures His Brothers - Verses 15-21**

<sup>15</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" <sup>16</sup> So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: <sup>17</sup> 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him, Joseph wept. <sup>18</sup> His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said. <sup>19</sup> But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. <sup>21</sup> So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

**50:15-21** Now that Jacob (or Israel) was dead, the brothers feared revenge from Joseph. Could he really have forgiven them for selling him into slavery? But to their surprise, Joseph not only forgave them but reassured them, offering to care for them and their families. Joseph's forgiveness was complete. He demonstrated how God graciously accepts us even though we don't deserve it. Because God forgives us even when we have ignored or rejected him, we should graciously forgive others.

**50:20** God brought good from the brothers' evil deed, Potiphar's wife's false accusation, the cupbearer's neglect, and seven years of famine. The experiences in Joseph's life taught him that God brings good from evil for those who trust him. Do you trust God enough to wait patiently for him to bring good out of bad situations? You can trust him because, as Joseph learned, God can overrule people's evil intentions to bring about his intended results.

### **The Death of Joseph - Verses 22-26**

<sup>22</sup> Joseph stayed in Egypt, along with all his father's family. He lived a hundred and ten years <sup>23</sup> and saw the third generation of Ephraim's children. Also the children of Makir son of Manasseh were placed at birth on Joseph's knees. <sup>24</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." <sup>25</sup> And Joseph made the Israelites swear an oath and said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place." <sup>26</sup> So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

**50:24** Joseph was ready to die. He had no doubts that God would keep his promise and one day bring the Israelites back to their homeland. What a tremendous example! The secret of that kind of faith is a lifetime of trusting God. Your faith is like a muscle—it grows with exercise, gaining strength over time. After a lifetime of exercising trust, your faith can be as strong as Joseph's. Then at your death, you can be confident that God will fulfill all his promises to you and to all those faithful to him who may live after you.

**50:24** This verse sets the stage for what would begin to happen in Exodus and come to completion in Joshua. God was going to make Jacob's family into a great nation, lead them out of Egypt, and bring them into the land he had promised them. The nation would rely heavily on this promise, and Joseph emphasized his belief that God would do what he had promised.

**50:26** The book of Genesis gives us rich descriptions of the lives of many great men and women who walked with God. They sometimes succeeded and often failed. Yet we learn much by reading the biographies of these people. Where did they get their motivation and courage? They got it by realizing God was with them despite their inadequacies. Knowing this should encourage us to be faithful to God, to rely on him for guidance, and to utilize the potential he has given us.