



Genesis – 49:29 – 50:26
The End of the Book of Beginnings
(Lesson #61)

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Joseph's Timeline

Event	Joseph's Age	Genesis
Joseph's father moves family from Haran	6	31:17-21
Joseph is sold into slavery	17 / Jac 108	37:12-36
Joseph interprets the dreams of cupbearer and baker while in prison	28	41:1
Joseph's grandfather Isaac dies	29 / Jac 120	35:28-29
Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams and is released from prison	30	41:46
Seven years of plenty, Manasseh and Ephraim born during this time	30-37	41:47-52
Seven years of famine	37-44	41:47-52
Joseph and Jacob reunite (2 years into famine), and family moves to Egypt	39 / Jac 130	45:6, 47:9, 28
Jacob dies	56 / Jac 147	47:28
Joseph dies	110	50:22-26

Outline end of chapter 49 and chapter 50:

1. Following the utterances, Jacob charges his sons to bury him with his fathers in the cave that Abraham purchased (49:28-32).
2. When Jacob finished charging his sons, he yielded up the ghost and was gathered to his people (49:33).
3. Joseph had Jacob embalmed (50:1-3).
4. Joseph seeks Pharaoh's permission to travel to Canaan and bury Jacob (50:4-5).
5. Pharaoh gives Joseph permission to go to Canaan and bury his father (50:6).
6. Joseph leads a massive entourage out of Egypt to Canaan to bury Jacob (50:7-9).
7. At the threshing floor of Atad, Joseph mourned an additional seven days over the loss of Jacob (50:10).
8. The Canaanites observed the massive mourning and called the renamed the place where it happened (50:11).
9. Jacob's sons did what Jacob had commanded; in that they buried their father in the cave of the field of Machpelah (50:12-13).
10. The whole company returned to Egypt (50:14).
11. Joseph's brothers grow concerned that Joseph may pay them back for their sin against him (50:15).
12. Joseph's brothers send a message to Joseph that prior to his death Jacob commanded that Joseph forgive his brothers (50:16-17).
13. The brothers once again come and fall down before Joseph and declared that they were his servants (50:18).
14. Joseph is clear that his brothers have no reason to fear (50:19).
15. Joseph reiterates his belief that God was working in the background and reaffirms his commitment to care for his brothers and their families (50:20-21).
16. Joseph continued to live in Egypt and was able to see his grandchildren to the third generation (50:22-23).
17. Joseph gave command for his bones to be carried out of Egypt and buried in Canaan (50:24-25).
18. Joseph died in Egypt and was placed in a coffin (50:26).

49:29 Then he commanded them and said to them, "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 30 in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place.

Vs 29-30 - He had made Joseph take an oath that he would remove him from Egypt when he died and here he commands the twelve. Again, notice the wording for it points to Jacob's belief in an afterlife:

- 1) Jacob said I am to be **gathered to my people**, he is **speaking of death**, but he describes it as a **gathering to his people**.
- 2) He is going to be **gathered to his people**, but he is requesting his sons **bury him** and then he provides the location where he is to be buried.
 - a. Where his fathers are buried.
 - b. In the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, the field of Machpelah
 - c. It is located east of Mamre in Canaan
 - d. This is the field that Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite as a burying place.

31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah — 32 the field and the cave that is in it were bought from the Hittites." 33 When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

Vs 31 - Here Jacob outlines all who were buried in this cave where he desires for his body to be buried:

- First, it is in this cave where **Abraham buried Sarah (Gen 23:19)**.
- It is the cave where **Abraham himself was buried (Gen 25:9)**.
- It is in the cave where they buried **Isaac and Rebekah (Gen 35:29)**.
- It is in this cave where **Jacob buried Leah** (up until now we had no idea that Leah had been buried in this cave).

It is interesting, in this life Leah could never get close enough to Jacob, in death, she would be buried alongside him.

Vs 32 - Jacob reiterates that this is the field and the cave that were purchased from the Hittites. To be specific, it was purchased from **Ephron the Hittite**.

Vs 33 - Then Moses implies that Jacob died a short time after he had finished commanding his sons.

It is almost like he chose the moment of his death. It seems like he lived long enough to finishing blessing his sons and then he died.

He was now ready to die, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people. He would not be buried for a number of days, but he was gathered to his people right then! Again, this is a **beautiful picture of the afterlife**.

APPLICATION: The day is coming when each of us will be gathered to our people. Will it be people of faith or people that lived their lives apart from faith? But we will each be gathered to our people!

50:1 Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. 3 Forty days were required for it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy

days. 4 And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,

50:1 - Jacob having passed away, Jacob having gone home, Joseph weeps over him, hugs him, and kisses him. Although there have been some rough spots, they have got to spend the last 17 years together.

Joseph was a believer, yet he wept on the neck of his dad.

APPLICATION: It is quite natural and proper that we mourn the loss of loved ones. Not that we will not see them again, we do not mourn like that. But death was **not part of God's original design**, it is an **enemy** brought onto the playing field by **Adam's sin**. This enemy (death) will one day be destroyed (Rev 21:3-4).

By the way, do you remember when Jacob was trying to discern if he should go to Egypt, remember one of the things God told him? (Gen 46:4).

Vs 2-3 - Then Joseph gave command to his servants who were Egyptian physicians who specialized in embalming to embalm his father.

Moses tells us that the process for embalming took 40 days. Then Moses tells us plainly that the Egyptians wept for 70 days.

There would have been no way to mourn for 70 days and spend a couple of weeks taking Jacob's body back to Canaan without embalming him. If nothing else this was a purely practical move!

But imagine either Joseph's exalted status, or Jacob's exalted status that the **Egyptians wept for Jacob for 70 days!**

Vs 4 - Once the 70 days of weeping were past, we are told that Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh and ask them to speak in the ears of the Pharaoh on his behalf.

We will look at what he says to the household and through the household to Pharaoh, but for the moment let's focus on what Moses records here for it is not what we expected.

Now this is interesting at a number of levels:

- 1) Joseph speaks to **Pharaoh's household** to speak to Pharaoh on his behalf.
- 2) This is odd for we had previously read things that gave us the idea that **Joseph had easy and open access to Pharaoh** and Pharaoh listened to and followed Joseph's recommendations (Gen 45:8 and 45:17).
- 3) It seems likely that Joseph had now retired from official service to Pharaoh. After all, he served 7 years during the years of plenty. He served 7 years during the years of famine, and the famine ended roughly 12 years ago. It is possible that **Joseph at 56 is no longer in the inner circle of Egyptian politics.**
- 4) It is also possible that a new Pharaoh is now in charge.

5 *'My father made me swear, saying, "I am about to die: in my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me." Now therefore, let me please go up and bury my father. Then I will return.'* **6** *And Pharaoh answered, "Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear."*

Vs 5 - Here is the message the Joseph speaks to Pharaoh's household to speak to Pharaoh:

- 1) My dad Jacob made me swear that I would bury him in the tomb that he had hewed out for himself in the land of Canaan.
- 2) Please let me go and bury my father.
- 3) Then, I will return.

We wonder what the relationship between Egypt and the nation of Israel was like at this time. Had it already begun to sour? Were they already beginning to work for Egypt or was it still good?

Vs 6 - Pharaoh gives Joseph permission to leave Egypt, to go to Canaan and to bury his father. You will see this in a second, but it appears **Pharaoh approves an Egyptian State Funeral for Jacob**.

7 ¶ 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. 9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company.

Vs 7-8 - I do not know what you were thinking this funeral procession looked like, but listen to how Moses describes it:

- 1) With Joseph went up **“all” the servants of Pharaoh**. How many servants do you suppose Pharaoh had. Moses tells us all went up with Joseph to bury Jacob.
- 2) The **elders of Pharaoh's household**. The Hebrew word is זקן (**zaqen**). The word means elders, old, ancient, or aged. It is likely that these were various leaders in Pharaoh's court. Possibly like the chief Cupbearer and the Chief Baker.
- 3) All the **elders of the land of Egypt**. This is the same Hebrew word זקן (**zaqen**) and Fruchtenbaum believes these are nobles from the land of Egypt. **What did this look like?**

NOTE: Either all of this was done out of **respect for Joseph** or **Jacob had become a notable person in Egypt too**. The text simply does not tell us which of the two (although maybe both) are true.

- 4) All the **household of Joseph**. How big was his household?
- 5) **His brothers**
- 6) All his **father's household**

Then Moses tell us plainly: *Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen*. It appears that the **Israelite women and the children** stayed back, the rest went to Canaan to bury Jacob.

We should imagine a massive funeral procession coming out of Egypt and going to Canaan.

Vs 9 - Then Moses tells us plainly that with him went up multiple chariots and multiple horsemen. I am assuming this was an **army escort, possibly even royal bodyguard sent by Pharaoh**.

Moses concludes with it was a **very great company**. Whatever you are picturing in your mind, **I suspect it was larger than that!**

10 When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. 11 When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians." Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim; it is beyond the Jordan. 12 Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them,

Vs 10 - When this massive entourage came to the **threshing floor of Atad**, which is **beyond the Jordan**.

There, at the threshing floor of Atad, they lamented with a **very great and grievous lamentation**.

Notice the Hebrew structure: *When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days.*

There they **mourned for the loss of Jacob**. There **Joseph mourned** for his father for **seven days**.

Vs 11 - The **Canaanites who dwelt in the land**, saw the mourning and they said this is **grievous mourning by these Egyptians**.

Because this mourning was so different and so strange, they named the place **Abel-mizraim**, which means **“Mourning of Egypt.”**

Vs 12 - Then Moses tells us plainly that the **sons of Jacob did for him as he had commanded them**.

If you remember **Joseph made a solemn pledge (Gen 47:29-31) and the other brother had promised (Gen 49:29-30)**. The twelve sons **did as Joseph promised** and as **Jacob had commanded**.

13 for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. 14 After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

Vs 13 - Here Moses steps back and recounts what the sons did. The twelve sons (maybe 14) carried him to the land of Canaan. They buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, that is east of Mamre.

Vs 14 - After Joseph had buried his father, he returned to Egypt, with his 11 (or 13) brothers, and with all that had gone to bury Jacob.

So, before we read the next verses, the 70 days of mourning are past, the two weeks or so that it took to get to Machpelah are past, the seven days of mourning in Canaan are past, the two weeks or so of the return journey from Canaan are past, and everyone is now back in Egypt.

15 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 wept when they spoke to him.

Vs 15 - Everyone makes it back to Egypt, but now that Jacob is dead the other brothers begin to worry.

Apparently, from the context, the brothers discussed with one another their concerns. They talked about their fear. Maybe they called a family meeting (less Joseph) and here was the subject of the family chat: ***"It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him."***

Now that Jacob is gone, what will Joseph do to them. **Is it payback time?**

Now they had committed a horrible evil, and their concern, now that Jacob is dead, is not completely unfounded. After all Joseph likely still has a **great deal of political capital**.

They were concerned that the only reason Joseph had not already exacted revenge upon them was because of Jacob. Now that Jacob is dead what will Joseph do.

So, they crafted a plan, with the goal of saving their necks.

APPLICATION: *“fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Is 41:10, ESV).*

Vs 16 - So together **they crafted a message** and sent it to Joseph. We do not know who carried this message. I would guess (**Benjamin**) maybe even (**Judah**), but we do not know.

But notice, they did not initially present themselves **but sent messengers**. Here is the content of the message:

1) Right before dad died, he gave us (11 brothers) a command to give to you).

** Now, as we read this, scholars are divided, some believing that the sons fabricated this story, others believing that Jacob gave this command to the 11.

It seems odd that Jacob would give a command through the brothers, to give to Joseph, that he could have easily given himself. But it is possible Jacob gave it and told the sons to give it again at his death.

I would tend to believe the **sons have fabricated this story**. But we cannot be sure.

2) The substance of the command dad **gave us**, was to **say to you: "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you."** So, dad commanded us, to ask you to please forgive us, for what we did was evil to you.

Before we advance, there is something worth considering. This is the first time where the **brothers openly admit** that what they **did was sinful**, that it was **evil towards Joseph**.

As you consider this:

- a. So is this a lie
- b. Or the truth
- c. We may never know for sure

The brothers appear to be **repentant for their sins**. Verse 17 closes with **Joseph weeping**.

Was he weeping because of the **open confession of sin** or was **he weeping because his brothers thought he would execute vengeance on them?** They doubted his real character. We do not know **which one is moving Joseph**, but once again Joseph is moved by the events that are occurring.

18 His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." 19 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.

Vs 18 – Once again his brothers come and fall down before him. Here 40 years after they sold him into slavery, 17 years after they had moved to Egypt, once again Joseph’s brothers fall down before him and declare: **Behold we are your servants**. It is possible that this is part of their **open repentance**.

APPLICATION: Joseph in many different ways has served as a picture of Jesus, a picture of the coming Messiah. **Here all of the brothers fall down and declare that we are your servants**.

This should remind us:

- 1) We too are servants of King Jesus (Phil 1:1-2).
- 2) The day is coming when everyone will bow the knee to King Jesus! (Phil 2:9-11).

Vs 19 - Joseph, who was just a man, tells them what God has been saying through the book of Genesis **“do not fear...”** Then he asks a rhetorical question: *for am I in the place of God?*

Joseph understood he was many things, but he was not God. He was not the judge; he was not in the place to execute vengeance. (Rom 12:17-19)

Consider for a moment:

- 1) Joseph to some degree had the right to bring retribution upon his brothers.
- 2) Joseph had the power to bring retribution upon his brothers.
- 3) Yet, he knew that was not his role or place!

Vs 20 - Then Joseph makes an **amazing theological statement** that is **extremely beneficial** for us as we wrestle with understanding God's sovereignty and the evil that exists in our world.

Let's walk through Joseph's understanding of heinous acts and God's sovereignty, for I believe he has a correct understanding.

Man's Responsibility:

Here is how **Joseph summed it up. What you did you meant for evil.** He looked at his brothers and said, you had **evil intentions**, you plotted **evil against your own brother.** What you did was wicked.

God's Sovereignty:

But God **meant it for good**, this could be expressed a different way, **God used it for good.** God was in the background working silently and undetected to ensure he worked it to accomplish his good will.

APPLICATION: You and I must always look beyond the hand of evil that is being done against us and ask our Father, what is He working that glorifies Himself and benefits us. **We should look for the hand of God!**

Consider: Jacob had sent Joseph to see how the brothers were doing and all that occurred surrounding that event. Yet, through it all, God in the background, working through men, **unknowingly to get Joseph where He needed Joseph to be.** All the while using the sins of men, to accomplish His ultimate will!

This is the God we serve!

APPLICATION: When you and I are wronged, and we will be, keep this tucked away in the back of your mind. Often, God is weaving a tapestry in each of our lives. Trust Him, knowing that Rom 8:28 is absolutely true!

Vs 21 - Do not fear... This is the second time Joseph says this!

Then Joseph tells his brothers that he will continue to provide for them and their children.

He spoke kindly to them, and he comforted them. Joseph had experienced the love of God and that was the balm that healed the wounds his brothers had inflicted on him.

22 So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's house. Joseph lived 110 years. 23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation. The children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were counted as Joseph's own. 24 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."

Vs 22 - Joseph was **sold into slavery** and entered **Egypt at 17. 11 years later**, at **28 years of age** Joseph interprets the dreams of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. Yet it would be **2 more years** after that before Joseph would interpret Pharaoh's dreams at **30 years of age.**

Looking at it one additional way, **Joseph was 56 when Jacob died**, from the death of Jacob to the death of Joseph would be an **additional 54 years**.

Vs 23 - Joseph had the opportunity to observe Ephraim's children, all the way to the third generation. God gave Joseph some amazing blessings there in Egypt!

Then we are told that the children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were counted as Joseph's own. The New King James likely gets at what Moses is trying to say: *"Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees."* (Ge 50:23 NKJV)

Vs 24 - The Joseph calls his brothers; this is likely fellow kinsmen who are there in Egypt.

He tells them:

- 1) I am about to die.
- 2) **God will visit you and bring you up out of Egypt** and lead you back into the Promised Land. The land that he swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Joseph, now an old man is still a man of faith. He is a man who as he approaches death is telling his fellow Hebrews: *"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."*

CONSIDER: What is interesting to me is that Abraham had been told this by divine revelation, Issac had been told this by divine revelation, Jacob had been told this by divine revelation.

Joseph had been told this by his father and grandfather. Yet he operated with great faith in what had been handed down to him!

APPLICATION: When you and I go home to be with the Lord, what will we be remembered for? I hope one of the things, the leading thing, is our great faith in our loving and sovereign God!

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."

Vs 25 - Then Joseph made the sons of Israel, swear that they would **take his bones out of Egypt** when God came, visited them, and brought them up out of the land of Egypt.

SO YOU KNOW: *"By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones."* (Heb 11:22 ESV)

Believing that God would do what He said He would do was an act of faith.

At the **Exodus event** we read this in (Ex 13:19) and then in the book of Joshua we read (Jos 24:31-32).

Vs 26 - The book ends with what appears to be a whimper. **Jacob died at 147 years old and then later Joseph died at 110 years old.**

They had him embalmed, they **placed him in a coffin in Egypt.**
