



Lesson 37

Joseph's Death

Story Elements

- **TEXT:** Gen. 50:15-26
- **Setting:** circa 1730 B.C. in Egypt.
- **Main Characters:** God, Joseph, and his brothers
- **Plot:** Joseph's story closes with a scene of forgiveness and one more prophecy.
- **Key word(s):** "God meant it unto _____" (v 20)
- **Climax:** *Genesis 50:19* And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

God Meant It Unto Good

- 1) (vv 15-17) After Jacob's death, Joseph's brothers were afraid that he would change his demeanor towards them and treat them harshly, saying, "*Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.*"
 - a) His brothers sent a messenger to Joseph relaying one of Jacob's dying wishes: that Joseph would forgive his brothers for the evil which they did to him. Some have wondered whether this was a real conversation that Jacob had with his sons, or whether his sons were fabricating this as a way of insuring their survival in the face of a bitter and powerful man. I believe this was an actual event and not a deception because:
 - i) The brothers humbled themselves before Joseph, asking for forgiveness, and confessing that what they did was _____ (something Jacob would want them to do).
 - ii) The brothers confessed themselves to be servants of the God of Jacob, as Joseph was, and therefore recipients of the same covenant. Matthew Henry notes, "we must be ready to forgive all that are any way injurious to us, yet we must especially take heed of bearing malice towards any that are the servants of the God of our father: such we should always treat with a peculiar tenderness; for we and they have the same _____."
 - b) (vv 18-21) Joseph was so moved by his brothers' contrition and repentance that he wept. Notice some of the golden truths that he shared with his brothers in that moment:
 - i) "*...am I in the place of God?*" The brothers feared Joseph's vengeance, but Joseph knew that those who take vengeance assume God's _____ for themselves.

Romans 12:19 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

- ii) "*...But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good.*" Here is one of the strongest illustrations for the compatibility of man's free will and the sovereignty of God. Joseph's brothers willfully sold him into slavery – yet God sovereignly designed it for good. Notice how God did not merely **use** it for good, but God **meant** it for good. God's role was active, not _____.

God Will Surely Visit You

- 2) (vv 18-) Many years later, Joseph died, having lived to the age of _____. He was blessed to see his great-great grandson through Ephraim's line.

3) As Jacob had requested that he not be buried in Egypt, so Joseph requested that his body not remain in Egypt after his burial. This shows us two things:

a) Joseph understood that the Hebrews would be in Egypt for a long time – a prophecy God had given to _____.

Genesis 15:12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. **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; **14** And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

b) Joseph believed in the promises that God made to Abraham regarding the Hebrews inheriting the land of Canaan.

Hebrews 11:22 By _____ Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Genesis 50:24 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.

Answer Key: Key word(s): "good" • 1) a) i) evil; ii) Master; b) i) role; ii) passive • 2) 110 • 3) a) Abraham; Heb. 11:22 faith

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.