



The Road to Reconciliation

Volume 7 - Genesis 43 to 50



Meet Share Grow

Meet Together, Share Together & Encourage ONE ANOTHER



Coming Together
Once a Week



How to use this Scripture Engagement



Pray to Begin

Before you start each lesson, ask the Lord to use it to grow you up in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Read the Bible passage

Invite God to open your eyes and deepen your understanding of His Word as you read the passage.



Study the Scripture Engagement Guide

Go through the Scripture Engagement study provided to reflect on the meaning, context, and personal application of the passage you've read.



Reflect on the Scripture Engagement Questions

After every teaching, consider the Scripture Engagement questions listed for personal reflection and application and for your small group discussions.



Listen to Dr. J. Vernon McGee's Teaching

If you'd like to hear the complete audio teaching on the passage, visit ttb.bible or scan the QR code on the last page to download the THRU the BIBLE app in your own language.



Use our recommended **pause and resume icon**. This will guide you to move through the content thoughtfully and at your own rhythm.

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The Test

Begin with prayer

Read: Genesis 43 - 44

Listen: THRU the BIBLE - [Genesis 43](#), [Genesis 44](#)

Dear Heavenly Father,

You test us not to condemn but to change us. Search our hearts, reveal what needs to change, and give us courage to face it honestly. Where we've caused harm, let repentance lead to transformation. Above all, let Jesus, our Surety who took our place on the cross, move us from guilt to grace. Transform us from the inside out.

In Jesus's Name. Amen.



Tested by Grace: How God Proves and Transforms Us

In Genesis chapters 43 & 44, the famine drives Jacob's sons back to Egypt, this time with Benjamin. Joseph, still unrecognized as their brother, orchestrates an elaborate test: a silver cup hidden in Benjamin's sack, a confrontation, and an offer to hold only one brother (Benjamin) as a slave. The key question this chapter poses is: Have Joseph's brothers truly changed? Judah's speech in *Genesis 44:18-34*, in which he offers himself as a substitute slave to spare his brother and his grieving father, is one of the pieces of evidence of change in these brothers' lives.

STEP 1 Grasp the Story - What situation was Jacob and his family facing?

- A prolonged famine threatened the survival of Jacob's entire family. Their repeated trips to Egypt were driven by sheer desperation, not choice.
- Simeon is still in prison in Egypt. Jacob won't release Benjamin to go to Egypt.
- Weeks, maybe months, go by. Eventually, all the corn the brothers bought in Egypt is gone. They would starve to death if they didn't go back to Egypt to buy more food. What did the brothers do?
- Judah's offer to act as surety for Benjamin (*Genesis 43:9*) was a legally binding commitment in the ancient Near East: he was essentially saying, 'Hold me accountable if I do not bring Benjamin back,' risking his life and reputation on his brother's safety.



- The brothers knew their guilt. When accused, they immediately confessed: “God has found out the iniquity of your servants” (*Genesis 44:16*). They did not name Joseph, but 22 years of buried guilt surged to the surface.
- Judah’s final speech (*Genesis 44:18–34*) recalled Jacob’s words, ‘His brother is dead,’ referring to Joseph. The irony would not have been lost: Judah stood before the very brother Jacob mourned (Joseph), pleading for the brother Jacob feared losing (Benjamin).
- The transformation of Judah, who had proposed selling Joseph (*Genesis 37:26–27*), into the man willing to take his brother’s place was a stunning reversal that only God could accomplish.

Jacob’s sons, once callous enough to sell their brother for twenty pieces of silver, had been so profoundly transformed by guilt, time, and God’s providential work that they were now willing to sacrifice their own freedom for their youngest brother and their grieving father.



STEP 2 Measure the Differences and Identify the Similarities

Differences Between Jacob’s Family and Us

- **Covenant context:** Jacob’s sons lived under the Abrahamic covenant, before the Mosaic Law, and centuries before the New Covenant. **They did not yet have the full revelation of God’s plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.** The institution of surety was a familiar legal and social concept in the ancient Near East, **but for us, Jesus is the surety of our salvation.** (*Hebrews 7:22*).
- **Situation:** The famine was a specific historical crisis engineered by God to accomplish His purposes. Our lives may not involve literal famines like in Joseph’s days or Egyptian slavery, but we face our own pressures that God uses as testing grounds.
- **Culture:** Reuben, the eldest son, bore the shame of his sin and lost the unique honor granted to the firstborn. In our culture, many may not face the same loss of firstborn privileges as Reuben did because of his sin.
- **Dispensation:** These events occurred during the patriarchal period, before the full written revelation of Scripture. The brothers could not look back at a completed canon to understand what God was doing. We have the full Bible, the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the completed work of Christ.

Similarities Between Jacob’s Family and Us

- **Universal guilt of sin:** Every human being carries the weight of sin and the fear of exposure and judgment, just as Joseph’s brothers did.
- **God tests His people in every age:** Testing is a consistent pattern of God’s dealings with His people across all dispensations (*James 1:2–4*).

- **The longing for a substitute:** The brothers' desperate situation, in which they need someone to take another's place, speaks to the universal human need for a mediator and redeemer. Christ is our mediator and redeemer!
- **Repentance produces transformation:** The change in Judah demonstrates that genuine sorrow for sin produces a changed life, a truth that is equally applicable to believers in Christ today (*2 Corinthians 7:10*).

STEP 3 God's Eternal Truths Relevant to us

Genesis chapters 43 and 44 reveal timeless truths relevant to us today.

Eternal Truth 1: God tests His people not to destroy them but to refine and reveal their transformation.

Joseph's test was not an act of cruelty; it was a form of surgery. He had to determine if his brothers had changed before revealing himself and healing the family. Similarly, God orchestrates seasons of testing, not to condemn us, but to confirm the sincerity of our faith and to finish the work He has started within us. These tests expose what genuinely resides in our hearts.

Eternal Truth 2: Genuine repentance is evidenced by changed behaviour, especially toward the vulnerable.

Judah once exploited his position and power to sell Joseph for financial gain. However, in a nearly identical situation involving another younger brother (Benjamin) who was vulnerable, he used that same position to defend and protect him. This shift illustrates true repentance: breaking the cycle of sin. Those who once exploited others now take responsibility for protecting them, like a guarantor.

Eternal Truth 3: God provides a substitute who takes the place of the guilty, pointing us ultimately to Jesus Christ.

Judah's offer, "let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord" (*Genesis 44:33*), is a beautiful human picture of the divine reality completed in Jesus Christ. Just as Judah placed himself between Benjamin and condemnation, so Christ placed Himself between us and the judgment our sins deserved. This is the gospel woven into the very fabric of Genesis.



STEP 4 How Do God's Eternal Truths Fit with the Rest of Scripture?

God confirms and clarifies His eternal truths throughout the rest of the Bible.

Hebrews 7:22 “By so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.”

The concept of surety finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Judah was a temporal, imperfect surety for one brother. Jesus is the eternal, perfect Surety for all who believe, the guarantee of the better covenant.

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

The transformed brothers passed their test: they chose to stay with Benjamin rather than save themselves. Christ did infinitely more: He chose to die for those who were His enemies. **The pattern of substitution in Genesis 44 is perfected at Calvary.**

1 Peter 1:6-7 “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

God tests faith to prove it genuine. Joseph's test of his brothers had the same purpose: not to destroy them but to establish that their repentance was real. Our trials serve the same refining function.

2 Corinthians 7:10 “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”

Joseph's brothers' initial sorrow at being caught was simply the “sorrow of the world,” driven by fear of punishment. However, Judah's words reveal that their feelings had deepened into a genuine godly sorrow, one that leads to action, sacrifice, and reconciliation. This reflects the true path of repentance.

STEP 5 Apply God's Eternal Truths in Your Life

Embrace God's eternal truths from Genesis 43 and 44, allowing them to shape your thoughts, beliefs, and actions. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you in applying these truths to your life.

For Personal Reflection and Application:

- When God allows confusion, delay, or painful circumstances in your life, consider: might He be conducting a test? Not to harm you, but to reveal and refine who you truly are. Ask Him to show you what the test is designed to produce in you.
- Examine your life for the mark of genuine repentance. True repentance is not merely feeling sorry; it produces a reversal of the sinful pattern. In what area of your life has God been working a Judah-like transformation? In what areas of your life are you yet to experience genuine repentance?



- Rest in Jesus as your Surety. He has stood in your place before a holy God and declared: “Let me take what they deserve.” This is God’s Mercy. Because Christ is your Surety, you approach God not as a guilty sinner before a Holy God, but as a beloved child before a gracious Father. How would you respond to Jesus’s surety to save you, making your salvation eternally secure, so that you will not lose your salvation?
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- When others are vulnerable at home, at work, in your community, ask God to make you a “Judah”: one who steps forward with courage and love, willing to bear a cost so that someone else is protected. Who is God reminding you to protect?
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Personal Prayer Response:

Dear Heavenly Father,

I thank You that You test me not to condemn me but to mature me in the character of Christ. I thank You that Jesus Christ is my Surety that He has taken my place, borne my guilt, and secured my standing before You. Let the reality of His substitution shape every relationship and every decision I make.

Amen.



These studies are based on the THRU the BIBLE Genesis Bible Companion by Dr. J. Vernon McGee and the TTB Study · Interpret · Apply method, following the five-step Interpretive Journey outlined in Grasping God’s Word by J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays. All Scripture is from the New King James Version (NKJV).



I Am Your Brother

Begin with prayer

Read: Genesis 45 - 47

Listen: THRU the BIBLE - [Genesis 45](#), [Genesis 46](#), [Genesis 47](#)

Dear Heavenly Father,

We admit we're quicker to see our pain than Your hand. Open our eyes to Your sovereignty over every difficulty. Uproot bitterness and plant forgiveness. Guide us from striving to walking by faith. Do not stop until our last chapter is our best, for Your glory.

In Jesus's Name. Amen.



Sovereign Grace: God's Hand Behind the Hardest Stories

Genesis 45 to 47 contains one of the most emotionally charged moments in all of Scripture: Joseph's revelation to his brothers. After testing them, Joseph can no longer contain himself. He clears the room and weeps so loudly that "the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it" (*Genesis 45:2*). Then come the words that reframe the entire story: "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (*Genesis 45:4-5*). This lesson also follows Jacob's journey to Egypt, the third and final chapter of his geographical and spiritual biography, and closes with the family settled in Goshen, Jacob blessing Pharaoh, and the famine continuing under Joseph's wise stewardship.

STEP 1 Grasp the Story - What situation was Jacob and his family facing?

- The revelation of Joseph would have been shocking and deeply moving for him and his brothers. For 22 to 25 years, Joseph had been presumed dead. His appearance, as the second most powerful man in the world, standing before his terrified brothers, must be an emotionally charged moment.
- Joseph's refusal to seek revenge is remarkable because, in the ancient Near East, revenge was a common and expected response. By explicitly stating that his brothers' wrongdoing was part of God's sovereign plan - "God sent me before you to preserve life" (*Genesis 45:5*) - Joseph does not deny the evil committed. Instead, he reinterprets its significance within the context of divine sovereignty.
- Jacob's three-stage spiritual journey (Haran, Canaan, Egypt) illustrates his progression toward spiritual maturity. His willingness to go to Egypt only after offering sacrifices at Beersheba and receiving God's confirmation shows a man who had finally learned to seek God's permission before making major decisions.



- God's promise at Beersheba, "I will make of you a great nation there. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again" (*Genesis 46:3-4*), was a covenant renewal at the moment of transition. The Israelites in Moses' time would have heard this as the origin of the Exodus story.
- Jacob's blessing of Pharaoh, a shepherd blessing a ruler-king, was a remarkable inversion of expected power dynamics. It demonstrated that God's covenant promises carried greater weight than any earthly throne.

Genesis chapter 45 to 47 taught Joseph, his brothers and Jacob that God's sovereign hand had been directing every painful and bewildering event in Joseph's story and in their own for the preservation of His covenant people and the fulfilment of His redemptive plan, and that a man of faith (Jacob/Israel) could bless even the most powerful ruler because his identity and authority came from God, not from the world.

STEP 2 Measure the Differences and Identify the Similarities

Differences Between Jacob's Family and Us

- **Covenant and dispensation:** Jacob and his family lived before the completed canon of Scripture and before the New Covenant sealed by Christ's blood. The full Trinitarian understanding of how God works in history was not yet revealed. Yet the pattern of God's sovereign overruling of evil was being established in real time.
- **Joseph's typological dimension:** The Old Testament audience might not have fully recognized that Joseph foreshadowed Christ. From our New Testament perspective, it is clear that Joseph's rejection by his brothers, his elevation, and his revealing himself to them prefigure both Christ's first and second comings (*Zechariah 12:10; John 1:11; Romans 11:25-27*).

- **The specific historical crises:** The famine, the migration to the famine, the migration to Goshen, and Egypt's political structure under the Hyksos pharaohs were unique to their time. We do not face the same circumstances today.
- **Jacob's specific geographical restrictions:** God had told Abraham and Isaac to stay out of Egypt. Jacob needed specific divine authorization to go to Egypt. We are not under those specific patriarchal directives.

Similarities Between Jacob's Family and Us

- **Revenge:** We all face the question of how to respond when we are wronged. The temptation to bitterness, resentment, and the desire for revenge is universal and crosses every people, race, culture, and nation.
- **God's Goodness overturns evil:** God's sovereign governance of human history, including the evil that occurs within it, for the ultimate good of His people, is a consistent, unchanging truth across both Testaments.



- **Spiritual growth follows a consistent pattern for every believer:** First, a time living in the flesh; then, a struggle in our own strength; and finally, (by God's grace) reaching a point of walking by faith. Jacob's geographical journey mirrors this spiritual progression, making his story our story.
- **God's Faithfulness:** God confirms and renews His promises to His people at points of major transition and uncertainty. He does so for us through His Word and His Spirit, just as He did for Jacob at Beersheba.

STEP 3 God's Eternal Truths Relevant to us

Genesis chapters 45 and 47 reveal timeless truths relevant to us today.

Eternal Truth 1: God is sovereign over human evil, overruling it for His redemptive purposes and the good of His people.

Joseph does not say that God caused his brothers to sin. He says that God redirected the consequences of their sin to accomplish a saving purpose. This is an important truth we must understand. God does not author evil, but He governs it. He takes the worst that human beings do and weaves it into His plan without ever compromising His holiness. This is the consistent testimony of Scripture.

Eternal Truth 2: True forgiveness sees God's sovereign hand behind the evil done against us, and chooses mercy over revenge.

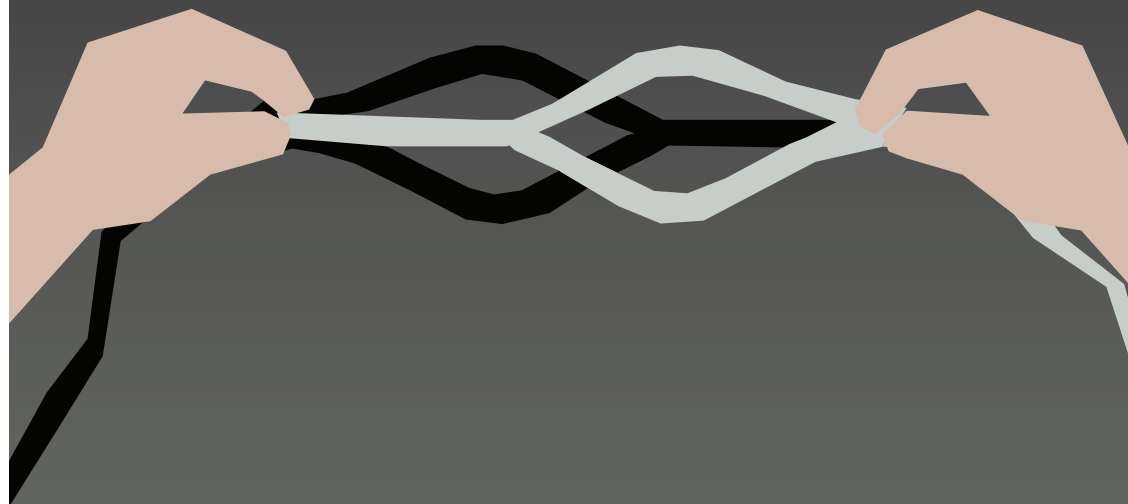
Joseph's forgiveness was not naïve; he knew exactly what his brothers had done. However, he saw God's larger purpose and chose to align himself with it rather than his wounded feelings. This is not merely a psychological achievement; it is a spiritual act enabled by faith in a sovereign God.

Eternal Truth 3: Spiritual maturity is a lifelong journey from living in the flesh, to struggling in our own strength, to walking by faith.

Jacob's three geographical locations are a spiritual map that every believer can recognize. We do not arrive at full faith overnight. God is patient with the process, as He was patient with Jacob across 130 years. His last chapter was his best, and that is both a warning and a great encouragement.

Eternal Truth 4: Those who belong to God carry a greater authority and blessing than any earthly power can confer.

When Jacob blessed Pharaoh, he was fulfilling his role as the covenant heir of God's promises, not overstepping his position. Today's believers are described as "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). We present the gospel in every interaction with the world, as ambassadors.



STEP 4 How Do God's Eternal Truths Fit with the Rest of Scripture?

God confirms and clarifies His eternal truths throughout the rest of the Bible.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

This is the New Testament expression of the eternal truth Joseph discovered. The promise is not that all things are good, but that God works all things, including evil, loss, and betrayal, together for the good of those He has called. The mechanism is God's sovereign governance; the foundation is His unchanging purpose.

Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son."

Just as Joseph wept and revealed himself to his brothers who had sold him, Christ will reveal Himself to His brethren, the Jewish people, at His second coming. Joseph's moment is a type of that future day of reconciliation and national repentance foretold by Zechariah.

Ephesians 4:32 "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

The standard of forgiveness Paul sets for the church is the same standard Joseph displayed: forgiveness modeled on God's own forgiveness. It is not conditional on the offender's suffering; it is an act of grace extended in the pattern of Christ.

2 Peter 3:18 "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."

Jacob's spiritual biography illustrates this command. Growth in grace is neither quick nor automatic, but it is real and possible. Peter's command echoes the pattern Jacob's life demonstrated: God expects ongoing growth, not a static spiritual condition.

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

This reality mirrors Jacob's geographical journey. "Egypt" - walking by faith - is what Paul describes as the crucified life, where self-effort has given way to trusting the One who lives in us. Jacob arrived at this in old age; Paul writes it as a spiritual journey of the maturing Christian life. God calls all of us there.

1 Peter 2:9 "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

Jacob blessed Pharaoh because he was the covenant heir of God. Believers today are the spiritual heirs of those same covenant promises in Christ. Every interaction we have with the world is an opportunity to bless them with the Good News to represent the God who has called us out of darkness.



STEP 5 Apply God's Eternal Truths in Your Life

Embrace God's eternal truths from Genesis 45 to 47, allowing them to shape your thoughts, beliefs, and actions. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you in applying these truths to your life.

For Personal Reflection and Application:

- Is there someone who has wronged you, and toward whom you are still nursing bitterness or a desire for revenge? Joseph's forgiveness invites you to reframe your story: not "they did this to me" but "God permitted this and will use it for something I cannot yet see." (*Genesis 45:5*). This is not minimizing the hurt. It is entrusting the situation to a sovereign God who governs all things.

- Where are you on Jacob's three-stage spiritual journey? Are you in "Haran", running from God, living in the flesh, not really looking to Him? Are you in "Canaan", wrestling, striving in your own strength, not quite surrendering? Or are you beginning to walk in "Egypt"? Where would you locate yourself on that map today, and what would the next step of faith look like for you?

- God appeared to Jacob at Beersheba and said, "Do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there" (*Genesis 46:3*). At points of major transition in your life, God wants to speak to you at your Beersheba. Before making significant decisions (about career, relationships, ministry), have you brought them to God in prayer and waited for His confirmation through His Word and His Spirit?

- You carry a greater identity than any earthly title or position. Jacob blessed Pharaoh, the most powerful man in the world, because he carried something greater than Pharaoh possessed. How does your identity as a child of God and a bearer of the gospel change the way you approach people of influence, power, or wealth in your own context?

Personal Prayer Response:

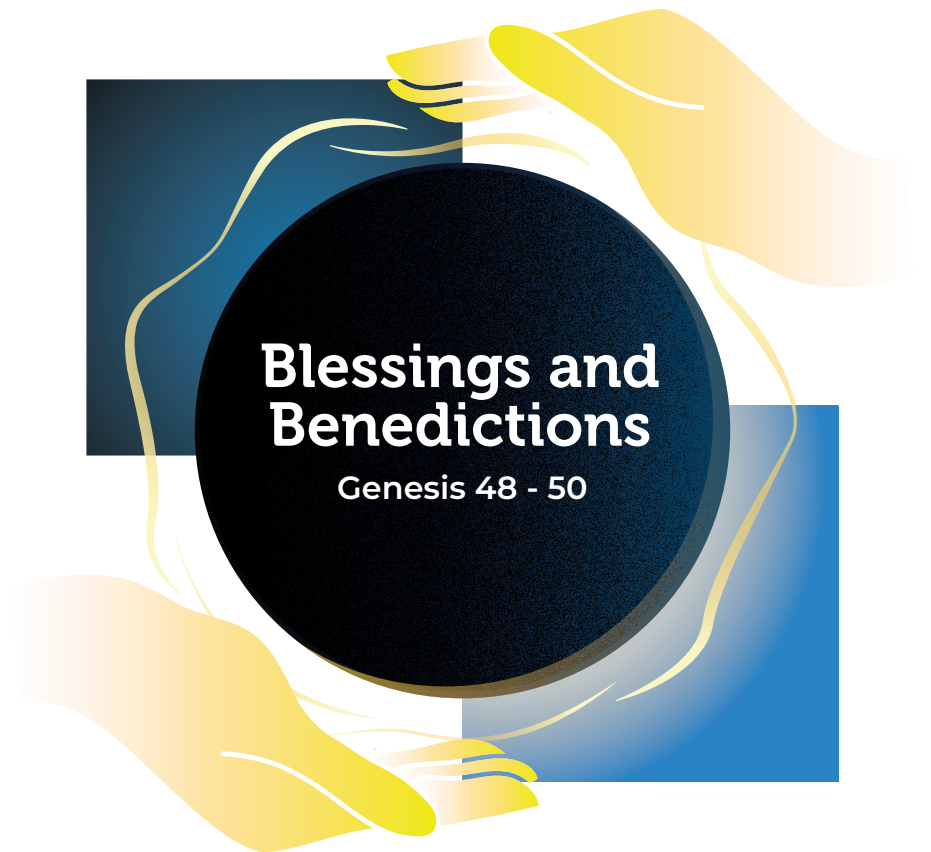
Father,

I confess that when hurt, I tend to seek justice myself or silently carry the wound. Help me see, like Joseph, that You are sovereign over evil. Teach me to forgive as You have forgiven me. Wherever I am, in Haran, Canaan, or Egypt, I ask You to lead me to walk by faith. May my last chapter, like Jacob's, be my best.

In Jesus's name, Amen.



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Blessings and Benedictions

Begin with prayer

Read: Genesis 48 - 50

Listen: THRU the BIBLE - [Genesis 48](#), [Genesis 49](#), [Genesis 50](#)

Dear Heavenly Father,

We don't deserve Your blessing, but You give it in grace. Write Your purposes into our hearts so we live and die in faith. Remind us that You overrule evil for good. Let Jesus, our Shiloh and rest, be the foundation of all we build and leave behind. Transform us so our legacy points only to You.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



Dying in Faith: Legacy, Providence, and the Finished Life

Genesis 48 - 50 brings the book of Genesis to its close. Jacob, nearing death and nearly blind, blesses Joseph's two sons, intentionally giving the greater blessing to the younger, Ephraim, over the older, Manasseh. He then gathers all twelve sons for his farewell message, a series of prophetic blessings that look toward the distant future of each tribe, with the most remarkable prophecy reserved for Judah: From the line of Judah will come the Lord Jesus: the scepter shall not depart from Judah until "Shiloh" comes (*Genesis 49:10*). Jacob dies, requesting burial in Canaan, an act of faith in the resurrection and the covenant. Joseph, after assuring his fearful brothers of his continued forgiveness with the unforgettable words of *Genesis 50:20*, dies at 110, giving instructions that his bones be carried out of Egypt when God brings Israel home. The book that opened with creation ends with a coffin, but with hope pointing forward.

STEP 1 Grasp the Story - What situation were Jacob and his sons facing?

- In the ancient Near East, a deathbed blessing from patriarch Jacob was legally and spiritually binding. Jacob's blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh, including his crossing of hands to give priority to the younger, had lasting tribal and territorial consequences. The original audience, familiar with Israel's tribal geography, would have immediately recognized the significance of this act.

- The Judah prophecy (*Genesis 49:8-12*) was the centerpiece of Jacob's farewell message.

Jacob/Israel's prophecy for Judah is the most important, so let's look closer at it. We've been told in *Genesis 3:15*, the very first prophecy in the Bible, that the "seed of the woman" will bruise the serpent's head. He'll be the one to get the victory. That seed was confirmed to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob-and now it's confirmed to Judah. Out of Judah's line, the Messiah will come. He's called Shiloh, meaning "rest/tranquility." He's the One who will bring rest. And the people who heard Jesus on that day when they rejected Him remembered He turned to the crowds and said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (*Matthew 11:28*).

That's Shiloh. Shiloh had come. Jesus is that Seed; He's Shiloh. And He's also the One who will hold the scepter. The scepter of this universe is in nail-pierced hands today. And not only do these pictures point to Christ, but we're told that, "there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel" (*Genesis 49:24*).



- Jacob's insistence on being buried in Canaan (*Genesis 49:29-30*) was not mere sentiment. It was a confession of faith in the resurrection and in the covenant promise of the land. He expected to be raised from the dead in the Promised Land when God fulfilled His purposes for the nation.
- The brothers' fear after Jacob's death showed how strong their guilt remained. They believed Joseph's forgiveness depended on their father's life. Joseph's reply is tears instead of anger; reassurance instead of blame, and his statement in *Genesis 50:20* "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." served as the highlight of the entire Joseph story.
- Joseph's instruction about his bones (*Genesis 50:25*) was an act of prophetic faith: he believed in the coming Exodus before the Israelites had become slaves, before Moses was born, before a word of Exodus had been written. He staked his burial on God's future faithfulness.

Genesis chapters 48 to 50 teach that God's sovereign, covenant-keeping purposes cannot be frustrated by any human sin, family dysfunction, or personal failure, that a life well-finished in faith is the most powerful legacy a person can leave, and that the Messianic hope, the coming of the Shiloh from Judah, was the anchor for all their future.

STEP 2 Measure the Differences and Identify the Similarities

Differences Between Jacob's Family and Us

- **Deathbed Blessings:** The deathbed blessing was a legal and cultural institution specific to the ancient Near East. In our cultural context, dying wishes may carry emotional weight but we do not get specific revelation from God to tell our children, other than to accept the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

- **Prophetical Fulfillment:** The tribal prophecies (Zebulun by the sea, Issachar in the valley, Dan as judge, etc.) were geographically and historically specific. They were fulfilled in the distribution of the land under Joshua and the history of the judges and kings. These specifics do not directly map onto our situation.
- **Promised Messiah:** The Shiloh prophecy (*Genesis 49:10*) had yet to be fulfilled for the nation of Israel, and they awaited its fulfillment. For us, it has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. We read it looking back at the cross and forward to a certain future.
- **Hope of Resurrection:** The Old Testament hope of resurrection was an earthly one in the Promised Land, as part of God's covenant with the nation of Israel. The New Testament adds the dimension of the church's heavenly hope, the Rapture, resurrection, and the New Jerusalem (*1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52*). Both hopes are genuine; they are distinct.



Similarities Between Jacob's Family and Us

- **Faith Beyond Death:** Every generation faces the realities of aging, death, and legacy. The way in which Jacob and Joseph died in faith, looking forward to God's promises, is the way a believer in Christ finishes their race of faith well.
- **God's Grace:** God consistently overturns human expectations of merit, birth order, and achievement to bless according to His sovereign grace. This pattern is present from Abel over Cain, Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Ephraim over Manasseh, and is culminated in the gospel, where the undeserving are made heirs through Christ.
- **God's Eternal Forgiveness in Christ:** The fear that Joseph's brothers have that Joseph's forgiveness might expire once their father Jacob dies is a fear some believers think about God's forgiveness. Joseph's assurance and *Genesis 50:20* speak to every Christian who wonders whether God's grace truly covers them. Every believer will acknowledge that what someone intended for evil, God has turned to good, so that His will may be done.
- **Facing Death Confidently:** The hope of resurrection and God's future faithfulness to His promises is the anchor that enables every generation to face death without despair.

STEP 3 God's Eternal Truths Relevant to us

Genesis chapters 48 and 50 reveal timeless truths relevant to us today.

Eternal Truth 1: God's grace is not determined by human custom, birth order, achievement, or merit. He chooses and blesses according to His sovereign, gracious will.

Jacob's crossing of his arms to bless Joseph's son was intentional, reflecting God's pattern in Genesis and fulfilled in the gospel. God chooses the younger and weaker to show blessing comes from Him alone. Our response should be humility and gratitude.

Eternal Truth 2: A life well-finished in faith is the most powerful legacy a believer can leave.

Hebrews 11 highlights the deaths of Jacob and Joseph as crowning acts of faith. Not their youthful exploits, but their dying moments, when they worshiped God and gave instructions about their bones. How we finish matters. Because God is patient and gracious, even those whose earlier chapters were marked by failure can finish in faith. Jacob's last chapter was his best.

Eternal Truth 3: Jesus Christ is the Shiloh, the fulfillment of Jacob's prophetic blessing over Judah: the Seed, the Scepter, the Shepherd, the Stone, the Star.

The Messianic thread running from *Genesis 3:15* (the Seed) through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and now through Judah, finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He is the One to whom the scepter ultimately belongs. He is the rest-giver. He is the Shepherd who gave His life, the Stone the builders rejected, and the bright and morning Star. The entire book of Genesis has been moving toward Him.

Eternal Truth 4: God's ultimate purposes cannot be frustrated by human sin, God overrules evil for the good of His people and the salvation of many.

Genesis 50:20 offers a comforting truth about God's sovereignty over evil inflicted upon us. The verse affirms that God's sovereign rule extends above and through human choices, turning even evil done against us, our suffering, into His good purpose. This reflects the steadfast character of the God depicted in Scripture.



STEP 4 Consult the Biblical Map - How Do These Truths Fit with the Rest of Scripture?

God confirms and clarifies His eternal truths throughout the rest of the Bible.

Hebrews 11:21 “By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.”

The New Testament’s “hall of faith” specifically honors Jacob’s dying act as the crowning demonstration of his faith. Not his wrestling match, not his vision at Bethel, but this: an old, blind, dying man worshiping God as he blesses the next generation. Faith is measured not at the starting line but at the finish.

Hebrews 11:22 “By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.”

Joseph’s crowning act of faith was not his resistance to Potiphar’s wife or his interpretation of Pharaoh’s dream, but his dying instruction regarding his bones. He believed in the Exodus before it happened. His faith rested on what God had said, not on what he could see.

Genesis 49:10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.”

This prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus Christ: He is of the tribe of Judah (*Matthew 1:2-3; Revelation 5:5*). He is the Shiloh, the One who brings rest (*Matthew 11:28*). The scepter of the universe rests in nail-pierced hands.

Revelation 5:5 “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

Jacob’s dying prophecy about Judah reaches its ultimate fulfillment in the glorified Christ standing before the throne of heaven. The scepter has not departed. It never will.

Matthew 11:28-29 “Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Jesus explicitly identifies Himself as the rest-giver - the Shiloh. The rest of Jacob’s prophecy, promised through the coming ruler of Judah, is offered freely to every generation by the One who has come.

Romans 8:28 “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”

Genesis 50:20 is the Old Testament seed from which Romans 8:28 is the full flower. The principle is the same: God’s sovereign purpose governs all things for the ultimate good of those He has called. Joseph lived this before Paul wrote it.

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty ... that no flesh should glory in His presence.”

The pattern of God choosing Ephraim over Manasseh, the younger over the older, the unexpected over the conventional, is the same pattern Paul identifies as the hallmark of God’s grace in the gospel. God’s choices systematically disrupt human assumptions about merit and worthiness, so that all glory belongs to Him alone.



2 Timothy 4:7-8 “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day.”

Paul's dying words echo Jacob's and Joseph's. The mark of a faithful life is not a perfect record but a faithful finish. All three men finished leaning on something greater than themselves: Jacob on his staff as he worshipped; Joseph on God's promise of the Exodus; Paul on the risen Christ. This is the model for every believer.

STEP 5 Apply God's Eternal Truths in Your Life

Embrace God's eternal truths from Genesis 45 to 47, allowing them to shape your thoughts, beliefs, and actions. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you in applying these truths to your life.

For Personal Reflection and Application:

- How are you finishing? Jacob's story is a sobering yet encouraging reminder that it is possible to spend decades in spiritual immaturity and still finish well but finishing well requires the same faith Jacob eventually found. Ask God today: “Lord, what would it look like for my last chapter to be my best?”
- Do you find yourself wondering whether God's forgiveness truly covers you, especially when the mediating presence of a pastor, parent, or mentor is absent? *Genesis 50:20* and *Romans 8:28* declare the same eternal truth: God's sovereign grace is not contingent on any human circumstance. His forgiveness in Christ is neither conditional nor temporary. Rest in it.
- *Genesis 50:20* is God's response; it is a living framework for responding to injustice. Is there a situation in your life right now where you have been wronged and are waiting for the scales to balance? Entrust it to the God who overrules all evil for good, and take the next step of obedience, as Joseph did, without waiting for vindication first.

- What legacy are you building? Jacob's legacy was not primarily his wealth, his children's names, or his position. It was the faith he demonstrated as he died: worshiping God, blessing the next generation, and insisting on burial in the land of promise. Joseph's legacy was a set of bones carried for 400 years, a testimony to God's faithfulness. What are you leaving behind that will point people to Christ?
- Jesus is the Shiloh, the rest-giver. Have you come to Him? Are you living in the rest He offers, or are you still striving to earn your standing before God? *Matthew 11:28-29* is God's personal invitation to you, today

Personal Prayer Response:

Dear Heavenly Father,

I want to finish well. I do not want to reach the end of my life still carrying the weight of unresolved bitterness, unconfessed sin, or untrusting fear. Like Jacob, I want my last chapter to be one in which I lean on You and worship. Like Joseph, I want my faith to look beyond my own lifetime. And like both of them, I want the testimony of my life to declare: “God meant it for good.” Thank you for Jesus, He is my Shiloh, my rest.

And I come to You in Jesus' name. Amen.



These studies are based on the THRU the BIBLE Genesis Bible Companion by Dr. J. Vernon McGee and the TTB Study · Interpret · Apply method, following the five-step Interpretive Journey outlined in *Grasping God's Word* by J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays. All Scripture is from the New King James Version (NKJV).



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