



God Meant It for Good

Genesis 50

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Overview: The closing chapter of Genesis demonstrates how Jacob and Joseph continued trusting God in their final days even as they were destined to die in a foreign land. Jacob's passing was exceedingly grievous for Joseph, who spent most of his life away from his father, and for his brothers, who wondered if Joseph might now retaliate against them. Nevertheless, Jacob's final wish is granted as his body is transported back to Canaan, where he is buried alongside Abraham and Isaac. Upon their return to Egypt, Joseph's brothers request forgiveness, but Joseph has already concluded that he cannot hold a grudge against them. Joseph acknowledges God's sovereignty and goodness as the overriding narratives of his life, so he offers comfort and kindness to them accordingly. Jacob and Joseph's faith provide a fitting conclusion to the first book of the Bible as it encourages all believers to trust the Lord in this life and the next.

01. God's plan for our lives is not limited to the desires or designs of others; He is sovereign in all things, and His purposes are always good.

02. Our response to the events in our lives reveals whether we believe in His sovereignty and goodness; let us trust the Lord in life as well as in death.

Go to the Land I Will Show You

1. How does Joseph respond to the death of Jacob? Why is it important for Joseph to fulfill his father's final wishes regarding his burial? Have you ever had to work through grief and make funeral arrangements at the same time? What advice can you give to others who have not been through such an occasion?

2. Jacob's funeral procession was rather large and involved (see verses 7-11). What interest did the Egyptians have in mourning the death of Jacob? Can you think of any famous Christian leaders whose lives have made a global impact upon their death? What does this episode suggest about the impact Christians can have upon non-Christians with their lives?

3. Why were Joseph's brothers concerned about their relationship with Joseph after their father's passing? Is there any evidence that Jacob said what is reported in verses 16-17? What do their actions suggest about their consciences bothering them after all these years? What is the best way to address a guilty conscience?

4. Unpack Joseph's statement in verses 19-21. What does Joseph believe about God's sovereignty in general terms and in more specific or personal terms? What does Joseph believe about God's goodness in every situation? How can you incorporate the truths of God's sovereignty and goodness as you look at events in your own life?

5. Why is it important for Joseph to be buried in the Promised Land also? What does his request suggest about his belief in the future promises of God? When were his final wishes realized? (See Exodus 13:19 and Joshua 24:32).

For Further Reading: Thomas Mann, *Joseph and His Brothers* (Alfred A. Knopf; first published 1933-1943; English translation by John Woods published in 1956)

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