

# Pentwater Bible Church

*The Death of Joseph*  
*Genesis Message Ninety*  
*Genesis 50: 14-26*



Death of Joseph – Cano Alonso 1601-1667

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## Genesis Message Ninety

### JOSEPH'S BROTHERS AFRAID & DEATH OF JOSEPH

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#### Review:

NOW COMES THE DEATH OF JACOB

Genesis 49: 29-33

After the blessing, Jacob again expressed to his twelve sons his desire to be buried in the sepulcher of his fathers (Genesis 24), where Isaac and Rebekah and his own wife Leah lay by the side of Abraham and Sarah, which Joseph had already promised on oath to perform (Genesis 47:29–31). This is not where Rachel was buried. This is also the only mention of Leah's death and burial. She finally got to be close to him. She could not do this in life but in death she did. He then drew his feet into the bed to lie down, for he had been sitting upright while blessing his sons, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered to his people. He departed from this earthly life without a struggle. His age is not given here, because that has already been done at Genesis 47:28.

So Jacob died after 147 years on this earth. He had many sins. But Jacob had an unrestrained desire for God's blessing. He had a deep faith that always relied on God in spite of all else. In the end he died as a man of genuine faith. He learned in his life where the real blessings came from, and he fought with God and man to be privileged to hand them on to his sons. He knew that his progeny would populate the world and be as the sands of the sea (Genesis 32:12). They have become a major nation on the earth.

THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF JACOB CONTINUED:

Genesis 50:1-3

Joseph loved his father and he loved and knew the Lord. When one knows the Lord intimately Heaven is revealed to them. We have the knowledge of the hereafter and that is comforting. We weep for our loved ones when they pass. It is not as the heathen weeps that cannot be comforted. We know where they are and we will follow them. Joseph reflected on his life's experiences with his father and mourning came to him. It is natural to feel the loss when a loved one dies. Sometime in the future death will be eliminated and we will no longer be separated from our loved ones (Revelation 21:4). For now though we feel its sting when the person who we love is separated from their body and the animation that we are so accustomed to ceases. We feel the loss and we mourn. Joseph finally got to close his father's eyes as prophecied (Genesis 46:4).

Joseph then *Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father:* He did not use the paid embalmers. Joseph only needed to have Israel's body preserved until they were able to inter it in Canaan. The professional embalmers were magicians who treated the process as one in which the spirit was dedicated to the spirits of the

underworld. Joseph wanted to avoid this. Herodotus, the ancient Greek historian who is often called the father of history (Cir 484 B.C – 425 B.C.), describes the Egyptian method and some of the beliefs surrounding it in volume II of his book Histories. This is a general summation of his explanation.

First there was a period of seventy days for embalming and mourning. Then the body was laid on a wood table. The mode of embalming, according to the most perfect process, is the following: Here, the body was washed with a solution of natron and water. In order to dry the body completely, the internal organs must be removed. The first organ removed was the brain. The Egyptians believed that the brain was of little importance and it was thrown away when removed. The Brain tissue was then pulverized into an almost liquid state. Palm wine and frankincense was used to flush and clean the cranial cavity. The next step was to remove the internal organs. Herodotus described using a sharp black stone to slice open the abdomen. The heart was the only organ that the Egyptians left intact because this is where they believed the essence of a person lived. After removing the internal organs, they were washed with frankincense, myrrh and palm wine. Then they would be dried using natron. After being individually preserved, the organs were stored in a special canister called a canopic jar. The lids of canopic jars are shaped like the heads of Egyptian gods, the four sons of Horus. They were dedicated to these genies of the underworld. This is what Joseph was avoiding. Then the body was treated with natron and salt for seven days to cause a rapid dehydration without decomposition. Then it was treated with pitch, gums and resin. Finally it was laid in a mummy case.

No doubt this process was followed to embalm Jacob without the mystical arts component. Then *forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed*: This was standard for the Egyptian embalming. The standard mourning period for the Jews was forty days. The Egyptians *mourned for him threescore and ten days*. They would mourn a person of his status in their society seventy days. This is why Joseph had Jacob embalmed. It would be over two months before he could get the body back to Canaan for burial. It had to be preserved.

## THE BURIAL OF JACOB

### Genesis 50:4-9

When the mourning process had ended Joseph approached the courtiers to Pharaoh. He explained *saying, "If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, <sup>5</sup> My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me."* Joseph was ever the gracious, polite man who knew his position under Pharaoh and his God as well. He simply explained to them that he had made an oath to his father to personally return Jacob's body to Canaan for burial (Genesis 47:29). Additionally royal permission was required to enable Joseph to pass beyond the boundaries of Egypt, especially when accompanied by a large funeral procession. Pharaoh's answer would, of course, be conveyed through the courtiers. *And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear*. Pharaoh recognized the earnestness of Joseph in this request and knew he would return again to Egypt to resume his high administrative activities to the crown.

After the king's permission had been obtained, Israel's body was carried to Canaan, attended by a large company. With Joseph there went up "*all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt.*" This was all the leading officers of the court and state, "*and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house,*" i.e., all the members of the families of Joseph, of his brethren, and of his deceased father, "*excepting only their children and flocks; also chariots and horsemen,*" as an escort for the journey through the desert, "*a very large army.*" The splendid retinue of Egyptian officers was all due to the esteem in which Joseph was held in Egypt. He persevered through many trials and brought that nation out of a famine. The children and the livestock had no need to go. For insurance Pharaoh provided *chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.*

#### THE FUNERAL PROCESSION'S ARRIVAL

Genesis 50:10-13

They traveled to the threshing floor of Atad, which is on the northwest side of the Jordan. This was actually the Cis-Jordan (Now the West Bank) since the Canaanites were still there then. The threshing-floor, or in Hebrew *goren*, was a large open circular area which was used for trampling out the corn by means of oxen, and was convenient for the accommodation of a large body of people such as accompanied Joseph.

The funeral takes place in two stages. The entire cortege first proceeds to a place at which a great public mourning ceremony is held. This is Atad, which they change the name to be *Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan*. Here formal Egyptian participation in the rites was completed. Then, after a week's stay, the immediate family continues the journey to the Cave of Machpelah, where the body is privately interred. So the entire procession went the threshing floor of Atad and only the family went to the actual burial place of the Cave of Machpelah.

Jacob's sons did as he asked. They brought him back to Machpelah, which Abraham bought and was buried along with Sarah. So in the end, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob were placed there. Jacob's life finally came to its end and he rested in the family burying place.

#### **Today's Lesson:**

#### JOSEPH'S BROTHER AGAIN FEAR HIM

Genesis 50:14-21

<sup>14</sup> *And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.* <sup>15</sup> *And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil, which we did unto him.* <sup>16</sup> *And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,* <sup>17</sup> *So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto*

*thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. <sup>18</sup> And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. <sup>19</sup> And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. <sup>21</sup> Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them (KJV).*

The funeral had been completed. The private internment for the family at the cave of Machpelah ended so they family and entourage went back to Egypt. They were now going to begin life without Jacob. The ten brothers who had been so cruel to him so many years ago began to think that it was Jacob who had protected them from Joseph's vengeance. They still had not learned fully that Joseph loved God and wanted His ways more than anything in this life. Looking back on the seventeen years that Jacob had lived in Egypt with his sons they had never sought forgiveness from Joseph for all the crimes they perpetrated against him. In fact since Joseph revealed himself to them and reconciled with them (Genesis 45) they never asked him to forgive them. They must have lived for those seventeen with some degree of anxiety that some day Joseph would get his vengeance for what they did to him. So now that Jacob was dead thy brothers began to think their wall of protection had fallen and powerful Joseph would now bring retributive harm to them. The full realization of what they had done, never asking forgiveness and Jacob's death struck them as likely Joseph would harbor a grudge and seek to harm them.

They send a message to Joseph through a third party rather than risk a personal confrontation. This was as Joseph did when he got permission from Pharaoh to bury his father in Canaan. Since Benjamin was his full brother and too young to have collaborated with the other ten to sell Joseph it is likely he was the intermediary. They began to think that Joseph's forbearance all these years was simply a desire to avoid any further family pain to their father. So once again they resorted to a lie to appeal to Joseph to not harm them. They concocted a fictitious story from their father. *Thy father did command before he died, saying, "So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father."* Joseph had no thoughts of any retribution for the sins they committed toward him. But the story did touch him greatly as it brought him to tears as he began to speak to them. Joseph wept on several occasions in the lengthily period of reconciliation with his brothers. As he tested them earlier to determine if he could trust them as he evaluated them he wept. Joseph was overcome by emotion through the events of the long reconciliation. His brother's reaction to Joseph's was to fall down in front of him and offer themselves as slaves. They still did not know the mind of God as did Joseph. Joseph quickly established himself in their presence and said that they should "*Fear not: for am I in the place of God?*" In other words he is not God and is not the ruler of the cosmos, only Egypt. He then went on to say "*But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good,*" He then finished by referring to the events of the kidnapping, slavery, famine and rise to power in Egypt to save them and the nation of Israel. Joseph loved God but he also knew that he was not God. Joseph knew that he could have never orchestrated such a vastly complex plan to

save Israel. Moreover, human actions and their consequences are far more profound than human intentions. God will use man's evil purposes as the tool for ultimate good, beyond the knowledge, desire, or realization of the people involved. What may seem to be a chance succession of unrelated incidents is in reality a process, that the God of the universe is orchestrating to bring about His will. Even though the text does not say he forgave them, by inference to the Great Almighty who controls and rules from Heaven he gave the matter to Him for resolution. That amounted to forgiveness. His actions toward them also affirmed it. He comforted and assured them that he would care for them and their families with food and kindness.

*Proverbs 16:9*

*A man's heart deviseth his way; But Jehovah directeth his steps (ASV 1901).*

*Proverbs 19:21*

*There are many devices in a man's heart; But the counsel of Jehovah, that shall stand (ASV 1901).*

*Proverbs 20:24*

*A man's goings are of Jehovah; How then can man understand his way? (ASV 1901)*

Encapsulated in this passage are some of the most important lessons a Christian man or woman can learn.

1. God is in complete control of the affairs of men on this earth. This is not something to be easily understood if at all. Many have tried and fell short of understanding the Creator of all we see and are. He somehow allows humans to have some degree of sovereignty to let us think we are in charge so to speak. Yes we do have some choices and He does not make each of our movements into those of a puppet by a puppeteer. Never the less, somehow he directs and achieves His will in all that He purposes to do. We will never understand it but must accede to Him His sovereignty in all things. Therefore we worship Him and love Him with all of our souls, hearts, minds and strength. We do have the mind of Christ to let us see some of what God is doing.

*I Corinthians 2:16*

*For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ (KJV).*

2. Forgiveness is not an option for those who claim the name of Christ. This story of Joseph lets us see that it is paramount to please God. When we are "right" with God we want to forgive because we see the events of this earth from His vantage point. All have sinned and fell

short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We must stay close to God so we can have His mind imparted to us and therefore as much as possible we must pattern our thoughts, as He would have us think. Joseph was quick to forgive his brothers. However, he continued to be wary of them. He knew what they were like and if he placed too much trust in them he would be foolish. He knew better. We should too. This means that we must forgive others but it is foolish to place ourselves in a vulnerable position to be harmed when we know that some people are prone to do it again to us. Therefore we must be ready to forgive all that are any way harmful to us even if they do not ask. This will relieve us of any burden of malice toward them. So this means that we cannot bear any malice towards any especially those that are the servants of the God we worship. This does not make the sin the less sinful, nor sinners the any less guilty, but it contributes greatly to the glory of God.

*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, (KJV)*

#### JOSEPH'S DEATH

Genesis 50:22-26

*<sup>22</sup> And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. <sup>23</sup> And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees. <sup>24</sup> 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. <sup>25</sup> And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. <sup>26</sup> So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt (KJV).*

Joseph was fifty-six years old when Jacob died. So he continued to live another fifty-four years old. He died at the age of one hundred ten. Abraham died at one hundred seventy five, Isaac was one hundred eighty and Jacob left the earth at one hundred forty seven years. Man's longevity continued to decline after the Great Flood as entropy increased and the speed of light slowed.

Joseph lived long enough to know some of his great-grandchildren. Manasseh had two sons, Machir and Asriel (Numbers 26:29-34; 32:39; Joshua 17:1; Judges 5:14; Chronicles 7:14-18) and probably others. Manasseh's grandson was Gilead who became the Gileadites (Numbers 26:19,20). All this was in fulfillment of Genesis 49:25. Ephraim's children were not named. However Gilead had Shem, Japheth and Sheresh. Sheresh had Ulum and Rakem.



Finally fifty-four years later Joseph died. On his deathbed he spoke to the remaining brothers telling them by an oath, “*God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.*” And indeed four hundred years later when the Exodus was underway they took Joseph’s embalmed body with them as they left Egypt for the Promised Land. We see the fulfillment of this in Exodus 13:19 which discusses the removal of his bones from Egypt and Joshua 24:32 says that they buried his bones in the Land of Israel. Genesis closes with an assurance of redemption. The people of Israel will possess the land pledged to them by God in His oaths to the patriarchs.

Date	Patriarch’s Events	Years Elapsed
<b>2166 B.C.</b>	Abraham Born	
<b>2066 B.C.</b>	Isaac Born	100
<b>2006 B.C.</b>	Jacob Born	60
<b>1991 B.C.</b>	Abraham Dies	15
<b>1915 B.C.</b>	Joseph Born	76
<b>1898 B.C.</b>	Joseph Sold	17
<b>1886 B.C.</b>	Isaac Dies	12
<b>1876 B.C.</b>	Jacob to Egypt	10
<b>1859 B.C.</b>	Jacob Dies	17
<b>1805 B.C.</b>	Joseph Dies	54
	<b>Total</b>	<b>361</b>

NEXT WEEK: THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS INTRODUCTION

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

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## HUMAN CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Name	Year	Age at Birth of Seed Son	Age at Death	Year of Death From Creation
<b>Adam</b>	0	130	930	930
<b>Seth</b>	130	105	912	1042
<b>Enosh</b>	235	90	905	1140
<b>CAINEN</b>	325	70	910	1235
<b>MAHALALEL</b>	395	65	895	1290
<b>JARED</b>	460	162	962	1422
<b>ENOCH</b>	622	65	365	987
<b>METHUSELAH</b>	687	187	969	1656
<b>LAMECH</b>	874	182	777	1651
<b>NOAH</b>	1056	502	950	2006
<b>SHEM</b>	1558	100	600	2158
<b>ARPHAXAD</b>	1658	35	438	2096
<b>SHELAH</b>	1693	30	433	2126
<b>EBER</b>	1723	34	464	2187
<b>PELEG</b>	1757	30	239	1996
<b>REU</b>	1787	32	239	2026
<b>SERUG</b>	1819	30	230	2049
<b>NAHOR</b>	1849	29	148	1997
<b>TERAH</b>	1878	70	205	2083
<b>ABRAHAM</b>	1948	100	175	2123
<b>ISAAC</b>	2048	60	180	228
<b>JACOB</b>	2108	UNKNOWN	147	2255
<b>JOSEPH</b>	2218	UNKNOWN	110	2365