

## MAKING LEMONADE "LEMONS TO LEMONADE" GENESIS 50:1-26

### This Week's Core Competency

**Peace**— I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, others, and me. Philippians 4:6-7, *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Joseph's brothers' deception, intended to secure his forgiveness, reduces him to tears. Following their father's funeral, fearing that Joseph will have second thoughts about taking revenge on them for their treachery decades earlier, his brothers send word to him under the pretense of their father's instruction: "Your father left these instructions before he died: 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servant of the God of your father" (Ge 50:16-17). Clearly, Jacob sent no such message. One commentator explains: "The death of their father inevitably brought about changes in family relationships, and fears arose that all the old animosities would rear their heads again now that their one-time enemy was in the place of supreme power. Without the restraining presence of the old patriarch, what was to prevent Joseph from avenging their treatment of him? That he should actually have forgiven them did not enter their heads, so they concocted words

*That God overrules the plans of the wicked to achieve his own purposes pervades Scripture.*

— Gordon Wenham

attributed to their father, requesting Joseph to forgive the transgression they had committed. It was their total misunderstanding of his motives that caused Joseph to weep" (Joyce G. Baldwin, *The Message of Genesis 12-50*, TBST, 218).

In fact, Joseph has forgiven them and made it clear to them. After revealing himself to them on their return trip to Egypt, he assures them, "Now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you . . . God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance" (45:5-6). What's more, "he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him" (vv. 14-15).

But they have not fully assimilated his forgiveness, perhaps because they have not owned up to their sin. That is about to change. Another commentator writes: "In their possibly manufactured message from their now-deceased father, we find the first acknowledgment of guilt by the brothers, yet even now they offer it in the context of a message from their father rather than owning up to it themselves" (John H. Walton, *The NIV Application Commentary: Genesis*, 720). But then they appear before Joseph and throw themselves down before him saying, "We are your slaves" (v. 18). In context this serves as an explicit confession and request for forgiveness.

Joseph then reassures them, saying, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide

cont. pg. 2

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for you and your children. And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them" (vv. 19-21). His reassurance puts their fears to rest and eliminates their anxiety.

On Joseph's classic theological statement, a different commentator writes: "The sovereign plan of God, designed to save many people alive, in some way incorporated the evil of the brothers and used it as the means of bringing about the good. On the basis of his confidence in the ways of the Lord, Joseph was able to comfort his brothers and relieve their fears" (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 716).

## day **1** ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### Read Genesis 50:1-26

1 Joseph threw himself on his father and wept over him and kissed him. 2 Then Joseph directed the physicians in his service to embalm his father Israel. So the physicians embalmed him, 3 taking a full forty days, for that was the time required for embalming. And the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

4 When the days of mourning had passed, Joseph said to Pharaoh's court, "If I have found favor in your eyes, speak to Pharaoh for me. Tell him, 5 'My father made me swear an oath and said, "I am about to die; bury me in the tomb I dug for myself in the land of Canaan." Now let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.'" "

6 Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear to do."

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father. All Pharaoh's officials accompanied him—the dignitaries of his court and all the dignitaries of Egypt— 8 besides all the members of Joseph's household and his brothers and those belonging to his father's household. Only their children and their flocks and herds were left in Goshen. 9 Chariots and horsemen also went up with him. It was a very large company.

10 When they reached the threshing floor of Atad, near the Jordan, they lamented loudly and bitterly; and there Joseph observed a seven-day period of mourning for his father. 11 When the Canaanites who lived there saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "The Egyptians are holding a solemn ceremony of mourning." That is why that place near the Jordan is called Abel Mizraim.

12 So Jacob's sons did as he had commanded them: 13 They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field as a burial place

from Ephron the Hittite. 14 After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father.

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" 16 So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: 17 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

18 His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said.

19 But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. 21 So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

22 Joseph stayed in Egypt, along with all his father's family. He lived a hundred and ten years 23 and saw the third generation of Ephraim's children. Also the children of Makir son of Manasseh were placed at birth on Joseph's knees.

24 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." 25 And Joseph made the Israelites swear an oath and said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place."

26 So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

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## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Circle "embalm" in v. 2.
- \* Underline "forty days" and "seventy days" in v. 3.
- \* Bracket "speak to Pharaoh for me" in v. 4.
- \* Highlight "It was a very large company" in v. 9.
- \* Circle "Abel Mizraim" in v. 11.
- \* Circle "your father" in v. 16.
- \* Underline "Joseph wept" in v. 17.
- \* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 19.
- \* Highlight v. 24 in a different color.

## day 2

## EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Joseph had his father embalmed, i.e., mummified, the Egyptian way. What does that suggest to you regarding *right* burial practices?
2. The Egyptians mourned Jacob for seventy days. So what?
3. Why would Joseph need Pharaoh's permission to bury Jacob, and why would he not ask personally?
4. What do you infer from the pomp and circumstance of Jacob's funeral?
5. Explain why Joseph's brothers had no reason to suspect that he held a grudge.
6. Had Jacob *actually* left instructions for Joseph before he died?
7. How close do the brothers come to confessing their sin to Joseph?
8. Put the gist of Joseph's reassurance to his brothers in your own words.
9. **Discussion:** Talk about significance of the similarities between Joseph's and Jacob's deathbed scenes.

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## day 3

### EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

The story of Joseph ends in Genesis 50 with the burial of Jacob and Joseph's own death and burial some time later. No more fitting summary of its concluding episodes can be found than the following:

"To modern readers, the last three chapters of Genesis seem to be rather an anticlimax after the high drama of the discovery of Joseph's identity in chap. 45 and his reunion with his father in chaps. 46-47. The accounts of the deaths of Jacob and Joseph strike us as over-detailed, if not morbidly melodramatic.

"But such a conclusion mistakes the purpose and interests of the author of Genesis. He is interested in the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham, promises of land, descendants, covenant, and blessing to the nations. In the very first chapter, he declares his blessing on mankind. The story of Jacob is dominated by his quest for blessing. Now at the end of his life that quest is completed. He looks back on God's promises to him and declares that 'El Shaddai appeared to me . . . and blessed me' (48:3). He observes that he has received more from God than he ever anticipated, 'I never expected to see your face; now God has showed me your descendants as well' (48:11). He reflects on the fulfillment of the promises. He and his fathers have acquired a permanent holding in the land of Canaan (48:4), both the burial place at Machpelah (49:29-32; 50:13) and land captured from the Amorites (48:21-23). As for descendants, he has twelve sons of his own and he adopts his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh too. Similarly, Joseph lives to see his grandchildren (48:12-20; 50:23) . . .

"And for all their failings, the patriarchs are portrayed preeminently as men of faith who placed their trust in these promises and looked forward to the day of their fulfillment. 'By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph. . . By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his burial' (Heb 11:21-22).

"It's not just the great overarching theme of the Pentateuch that this section relates to, but to the Joseph story in particular, that unhappy tale of disastrous sibling rivalry, which was only resolved through the overruling of divine providence and Joseph's magnanimity. Naively we tend to assume that all this dissension came to an end with the great acts of mutual recognition and reconciliation described in chap. 45. But the past is not so easily

forgotten, and with their father's death, the brothers start to worry again that Joseph will seek his revenge. For the first time, they frankly confess their sin and plead for forgiveness (50:17). Not for the first time, they fall down before him and offer to become his slaves (50:18). And this gives Joseph a chance to explain what is the purpose of all his sufferings. 'You planned evil against me. It was God who planned it for good, so that it should happen as it is today to keep many people alive' (50:20; cf. 45:5-8)" (Wenham, 492).

Following Jacob's death recorded in 49:29-33, chapter 50 opens with a description of his burial (vv. 1-14). The point seems to be that his sons "did as he had commanded them: They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had bought as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite, along with the field" (vv. 12-13; cf., 49:29-30). What's more, the pomp and circumstance associated with his funeral implied the importance of the patriarch in the eyes of the Egyptians. One commentator explains: "Jacob's elaborate funeral was probably due, both to the high regard in which the Egyptians held him as Joseph's father, and to the Egyptians' love of showy funeral ceremonies (vv. 7-10). It is the grandest state funeral recorded in the Bible, entirely appropriate since Jacob's story spans more than half of Genesis. The Egyptians mourned for Jacob 'seventy days,' just two days less than they normally mourned the death of a Pharaoh" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Genesis," 2016 ed., 312, [www.soniclight.com](http://www.soniclight.com)).

But the heart of the chapter is devoted to Joseph's response to his brothers' faux fear (vv. 15-21). Following their father's funeral, they worried that Joseph might have a change of heart and pay them in kind for all the wrongs they did to him (v. 15), so they concocted a plan. First, they fabricated instructions from Jacob and sent their draft to Joseph, requesting that he forgive them, in Jacob's words, "the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly" (v. 17). The very thought that he would do such a thing, after all he had done for them, left him in tears. Then, they came personally and threw themselves down before him, offering themselves as his slaves (v. 18). In response to their misguided ploy, he said again what in essence he had said before, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good" (v. 19; cf., 45:5-8), and assured them that he

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would provide for them and their children. This restored their peace of mind.

The last part of the chapter contains Joseph's deathbed scene and burial (vv. 22-26). Like his father before him, he instructs his brothers to carry his bones "up from this place" (v. 25), i.e., up from Egypt to Canaan. But unlike his father, he explicitly alludes

to the exodus 430 years later, saying, "God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (v. 24), at which time the Israelites did exactly what he had requested (24:32).

The message of this passage may, perhaps, serve as the message of the whole story of Joseph.

### *The Message of the Passage*

*You can cope with the hardships and reversals life brings knowing that God providentially uses them to fulfill his promises and accomplish his sovereign purposes.*

## day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the three "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

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# notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 2 **embalm** "The OT mentions the mummification only of Jacob and Joseph (v 26), doubtless a mark of their high standing in Egypt. Mummification was a long and complex process, which could involve extracting the brain and internal organs, filling the space with spices, soaking the body in niter, and finally wrapping it in linen bandages. Typically it took seventy days" (Wenham, 488). Others forty days: "The forty days were the period needed to ensure the preservation of the body (Herodotus says it was never more than seventy days, the period mentioned here for Egyptian public mourning of Jacob)" (Baldwin, 215). "Egyptians embalmed the honored dead to assist the afterlife journey. The Israelites did not embalm bodies, since they did not hold that conviction. Rather, they insisted that a corpse be handled properly because it was important especially for the living that the deceased rested peacefully in the grave until their resurrection" (Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis*, 619).

v. 3 **forty, seventy days** "The seventy-day period of mourning for Jacob (50:3) may include the forty days required to embalm the body plus the traditional thirty-day mourning period (see Deut. 34:8)" (Walton, 720). Seventy days "were the days of mourning for an Egyptian king. Diodorus describes a thirty-day preparation of the corpse with oil and spices and a period of public mourning for a king that lasted seventy-two days" (Waltke, 620).

v. 4 **speak . . . for me** "Note that Joseph puts his request indirectly to Pharaoh: he speaks to the 'house of Pharaoh,' i.e., to some of the courtiers. Presumably, some mourning custom prevented his own audience with the king" (Wenham, 488).

v. 9 **it was . . . company** "The narrator underscores the grand size of the funeral cortege. The Egyptian funeral retinue includes Joseph, the leading Egyptian officials, all the senior dignitaries from Pharaoh's court and the empire (50:7), and an army of chariots and charioteers. Accompanying them are all of Joseph's household and of Jacob's household (5:8), except the children and animals" (Waltke, 620).

v. 11 **Abel Mizraim** "Along the way the mourning of the Egyptians gave rise to the name Abel Mizraim. The word play on this name serves to retain the event in the memory of Israel. The place 'abel mi?rayim probably once meant 'the meadow of Egypt.' But the very mention of that name would now recall 'ebel mi?rayim, the 'mourning of Egypt'" (Ross, 715).

v. 16 **your father** "This probably a fabrication. The narrator connects their claim not to historical fact but to their fears (50:19)" (Waltke, 622). "Their great fear led them to attempt to deceive Joseph into thinking that Jacob had left this request. The impact of the request reduced Joseph to tears" (716).

v. 17 **Joseph wept** "He probably weeps because, after seventeen years of kindness to them that reinforced his original forgiveness of them (45:7-8), they still misunderstand his goodness and think that he will at last take his revenge" (Waltke, 622).

v. 24 **come to your aid** Lit., "visit." "This expression of Joseph's faith in God's promises to his forefathers, provides a fitting climax for the Book of Genesis and the formative period of Israel's history: 'God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob'" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Genesis," 2016 ed., 314, [www.sonlight.com](http://www.sonlight.com)). "The verb *paqad*, 'visit,' signifies divine intervention for the sake of blessing or cursing-both, in the case of the exodus, in which Israel was delivered at the expense of the Egyptians . . . It is interesting to note that the Book of Genesis falls silent on this note of the expectancy of the visitation, just as the Old Testament itself does, until Zacharias identifies the birth of Jesus as the long-awaited visitation (Luke 1:68). The New Testament also ends with the expectation of the visitation from heaven for the ultimate redemption and final fulfillment of God's promised blessing-'Come, Lord Jesus' (Rev. 22:20)" (Ross, 716).

## Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Indeed this is a crazy world we live in. Turn on the news or open an online news source and story after story reminds us that we live in a fallen world. There are some very real challenges out there! Joseph's life wasn't easy either. He faced hardships that we will never experience or be able to fully understand. But one lesson we can learn from his story is that God is sovereign and has a plan. After all his ordeals, Joseph is able to see God's hand at work. As he reveals his identity to his brothers, Joseph speaks of their sin this way: "Do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. . . . It was not you who sent me here, but God" (Genesis 45:5, 7-8). Later, Joseph again reassures his brothers, offering forgiveness and saying, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good" (Genesis 50:20). Man's most wicked intentions can never thwart the perfect plan of God. This is an important truth for our kids to know and grasp. Despite chaos around us - God is in control! Not only that, He loves us more than we can ever comprehend. Each challenge that comes our way has been filtered through His loving hands. That should inspire us to live with great confidence!

### What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Ge 50:1-26

1. What request did Joseph make of Pharaoh?
2. What were Joseph's brothers concerned about after they returned to Egypt?
3. What did Joseph say to them in verses 19-21?

### What Do You Think

After all that had happened to him, Joseph chose to forgive his brothers and take care of them. What would you have done? Is it easy for you to forgive others?

### What R U Going To Do

You will be heading back to school soon. Begin praying now for (1) your teachers, (2) your friends, (3) an opportunity to make a new friend, (4) your schoolwork, (5) opportunities to talk about Jesus. Keep a prayer journal and record answers!

### Core Comp

Peace - I live without worry because things are good between God, myself and others.

### Memory Verse

Ro 8:28 - *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

## KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse \_\_\_\_\_, completed *Scrolls* \_\_\_\_\_, brought Bible \_\_\_\_\_, brought a friend \_\_\_\_\_.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.  
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).