

**June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020**  
**The Faithfulness of God**  
**Genesis 50**

**BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN**

June 14 Psalms 1-8	June 18 Psalms 26-31
June 15 Psalms 9-16	June 19 Psalms 32-35
June 16 Psalms 17-20	June 20 Psalms 36-39
June 17 Psalms 21-25	June 21 Psalms 40-45

**Lesson Introduction:** *This marks our final lesson in the book of Genesis. What an incredible few months it has been as we have seen how the Lord worked to create a people for himself. It has been good to be reminded that God is both our creator and redeemer, and that He works in all circumstances to bring about His purposes for His glory and our good.*

*As we close out the book of Genesis this week, we come to the deaths of Jacob and Joseph. In the burial of Jacob we are reminded of the reconciling power of God, as we see Joseph and his brothers, together as a family, laying their father to rest. However, in the following verses, we see that Joseph's brothers have yet to fully believe that all is well between them and their brother. As we study, we will see how God brings about reconciliation, how He sets us free from the past, and how He works all things according to His purposes and remains true to His promises.*

**FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS:**

- **God brings about reconciliation (V. 1-14)**
- **God frees us from our past (V. 15-21)**
- **God is sovereign, and accomplishes His purposes through all circumstances (V. 20)**
- **God is faithful to keep His promises (V. 22-26)**

Read Genesis 50

**Discussion Section 1: God of Reconciliation (V. 1-14)**

-What other events in Genesis might the burial of Jacob by Joseph and his brothers remind us of?  
**(Genesis 25:9, 35:29)**

-How do we see God's reconciling power in these verses?

-Has there ever been a time in your life where God has reconciled a relationship? Is there a relationship in your life right now that needs to be reconciled?

**Note:** *Think back through the life of Joseph, specifically considering the way he had been mistreated by his brothers. He was hated by them so much by them that at one point they were intent on murdering him. They then decided to sell him into slavery and would lie to their father by telling him that a wild animal had torn Joseph apart. This led to Joseph being falsely accused and thrown into prison. We know the story turns out for good, but still, it is hard to image how Joseph could forgive, and how reconciliation could ever come about in those damaged relationships.*

*Yet, here at the beginning of our chapter, we see something significant happening. Jacob faces death, and we see his sons unite to take him back to the land the Lord had promised Abraham, that he could be buried there. This is not the first time in the book of Genesis that brothers who were once at odds had come together in peace to bury their father (25:9, 35:29). These incredible instances of unity show us the power of God to reconcile enemies.*

*We see in 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 what God has done for us in Christ, and how He has called us to take up that same mantle. It says, "16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*

*Because God has been so generous to us, not counting our trespasses against us, we too should be quick to seek reconciliation with those who have once been our*

enemies. The power of God is at work within us, and His power is what has reconciled us to Himself. As you consider your life, have you taken up the ministry of reconciliation that has been given to us by God? By His power, there is no enmity that cannot be overcome. There is no hurt that cannot be healed. There is no relationship that cannot be restored. May this story be a reminder to us that the Lord can heal all wounds, and that as His children, we are called to be ministers of reconciliation.

### **Discussion Section 2: Living in the Past (V. 15-21)**

-Why do you think Joseph's brothers were still scared?

-Are there past sins that you struggle to let go of?

-What does Joseph say to them to comfort them and assure them that their past sins were not held against them? (V. 20)

**Note:** Although it seemed clear that their relationship had been restored, Joseph's brothers were still unsure. They feared that, after the death of their father, Joseph might finally decide to get even. Although Joseph had reassured them in chapter 45 that he did not hold their sins against them, they were still uneasy about what might happen, and were not convinced that the past was in the past.

How often do we approach the Lord in this same way? He promised that, **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9)**. He has provided Christ as the substitutionary atonement for our sins (1 John 2:2). Even so, we still sometimes feel as if we stand guilty and condemned before Him. When we walk in the guilt and shame of our past sins, we fail to recognize that God has lavished grace on us that is far greater than all of our sins! He has forgiven us of our sins and cast them **"as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12)**. As we study this passage may we be reminded so clearly that **"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)**. There is nothing in your life that God is unwilling to forgive, and there is nothing that will cause you to stand condemned before Him if you have trusted in the saving work of Jesus Christ! May we not be like Joseph's brothers, fearful and guilt ridden, but may we live triumphantly and freely in the forgiveness that Christ has bought for us!

Amazingly, Joseph refers them back to the providence of God to assure them that they have nothing to fear. In verse 20 he reminds them that what they meant for evil, God meant for good. They are set free from guilt by resting in the sovereign plan of God. This is not to say that their actions were acceptable or good in the sight of God, but it is to say that God had redeemed those actions for His purposes, that He might receive glory and bring salvation to His people. Consider today how God has redeemed your past sins, and even used them to shape your future. Praise Him today that what you intended for evil, He has intended for good in your life!

### **Discussion Section 3: God Remains Faithful (V. 19-26)**

-What do these final verses tell us about the character of God?

-What are some of the ways we have seen God's faithfulness in the book of Genesis?

-What are some examples of God's never-ending faithfulness in your life?

**Note:** As we close out the book of Genesis, we see Joseph on his death bed, reminding his brothers that although they find themselves in a strange land, that the Lord would fulfill His promise by bringing them into the land that he had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. What we will find out in the weeks to come is that much pain and turmoil would come upon the Israelites before God would fulfill that promise. How good it is to be reminded here that, no matter what may be around the corner, the Lord can be trusted with complete confidence, and He will fulfill all that He has promised.

Perhaps you find yourself in a strange, uncomfortable spot right now, and things just simply have not played out the way you thought they would. May the book of Genesis serve as a beacon of hope for you today and in the future. The promise making, promise keeping God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is our God! His word is full of wonderful guarantees for His children, and we can take every last one of them to the bank with confidence. Perhaps 400 years of difficulty and struggle is around the corner, but that is not worth comparing to the glory that is to be revealed, which He has promised is waiting for those who are His (**Romans 8:18**)!