

God Meant It for Good

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[0 : 0 0] Chapter 49 ended last week with Jacob's death. Before he passed, Jacob prophesied the future! Those prophecies identified Judah rather than Joseph as the son of promise. The Messiah, we know, is going to be the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The final chapter of Genesis ends with Joseph's death, and before he dies, Joseph relies on God's providence as he confirms his forgiveness of his brothers. That's the main idea of the lesson. Joseph relies on God's providence as Joseph confirms his forgiveness of his brothers. Chapter 50 starts just after Jacob's death. All 12 of his sons are gathered around Jacob's bed, but no mention of Joseph's brothers is made until verse 8. So let's read all of chapter 50. Chapter 50 says,

Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him, and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.

Forty days were required for it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days. And when the days of weeping for him were passed, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found favor in your eyes, speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, I am about to die. In my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me. Now therefore let me please go up and bury my father, then I will return. And Pharaoh answered, Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear. So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household.

Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company. When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians. Therefore the place was named Abel Mizraim, it is beyond the Jordan. Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them, for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave at Machpelah to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephraim the Hittite to possess as a burying place. After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father. When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.

So they sent a message to Joseph saying, Your father gave this command before he died. Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.

[3 : 3 5] And now please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father. Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, Behold, we are your servants. But Joseph said to them, Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today. So do not fear. I will provide for you and your little ones.

Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. So Joseph remained in Egypt, he in his father's house. Joseph lived 110 years, and Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation.

The children of Manasseh, the son of Manasseh, were counted as Joseph's own. And Joseph said to his brothers, I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of the land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, God will surely visit you, and you shall carry my bones up from here. So Joseph died being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put

in a coffin in Egypt.

[4 : 54] We're going to split chapter 50 into three sections, and the first thing we see is the funeral. So the funeral is the first thing that we'll cover, and that section covers the first 14 verses.

We're going to cover those verses in chunks, and we'll start with verses 1 through 3. Here are verses 1 through 3 again. The process of mummification was very important in Egyptian culture. Great stress was placed on preserving the dead in lifelike form. The Egyptians actually believed that the survival of the body was necessary for continued existence in the underworld after death. The whole nation of Egypt mourned for 70 days at the death of the father of the man who'd saved their nation from starvation. To put that in perspective, the 70-day mourning period was just two days shorter than how long the Egyptians of that day mourned for a dead Pharaoh.

That shows that Jacob must also have come to be loved by the Egyptians during the final 17 years of his life. The focus on Joseph for these first verses seems to indicate that Joseph was closer to his father than any of the other brothers.

[6 : 32] That gives us an indication that Joseph must have made up for lost time during the final years that he and his father had together. Look at verses 4 and 5.

They say, He lived in Egypt for four decades now.

Remember that he entered as a slave in Potiphar's house. Then he spent several years in prison before ascending to the palace. In all that time, he was either a slave or a prisoner who could not go home.

And by the time he'd earned enough clout to be able to leave, the famine was so bad that his family had come to him. Now he's likely 56 years old, and so the man who left home at 17 is requesting permission to go back.

Verse 4 says that Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh. He sent that request through one of Pharaoh's handlers rather than asking Pharaoh directly. And that may seem a bit surprising to us.

[7 : 57] Certainly, Joseph would have been confident in approaching Pharaoh. But even in his grief, Joseph shows respect for Pharaoh's position. Joseph's actions there actually reflect the culture of that time.

In that day, during periods of mourning, those in deep grief neglected personal needs. They neither bathed nor changed their clothes. Everything actually came to a near standstill.

So Joseph and his family have been mourning the passage of Jacob for 70 days now. In his present condition, Joseph would never have thought about appearing before Pharaoh.

So it was a matter of respect and consideration. Joseph's consideration to avoid offending Pharaoh is reminiscent of what happened decades earlier when the then-prisoner Joseph was summoned to interpret Pharaoh's dream.

Joseph first took the time to make himself presentable, if you remember that. And as you would expect, because of what Joseph had done for Egypt, Pharaoh immediately grants Joseph permission to leave.

[9 : 01] Look at Genesis 50, verses 6 through 9. Pharaoh did more than just grant Joseph permission to leave. Pharaoh sent an anoraj with Joseph and his brothers.

Verses 6 through 9 say, And Pharaoh answered, Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear. So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household.

Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company. Even without the brothers, children, herds, and flocks, Moses makes it clear in verse 9 that this was a massive funeral procession, and that procession traveled 250 miles or so to the burial site.

And that big contingent traveling with Joseph and his family is another indication of the respect and love that the Egyptians had for both Jacob and Joseph. Look at verses 10 and 11 now.

They say, When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days.

[10 : 23] When the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor, they said, This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians. Therefore, the place was named Abel Mizraim.

It is beyond the Jordan. So by the time the funeral procession gets to Atad, almost three months have passed since Jacob's death. However, the caravan stops and mourns for another seven days. That seems excessive to us, but the additional mourning period is another telling detail here. The lengthy mourning period in Egypt was part of the Egyptian culture.

But remember, Joseph and his family are of Hebrew descent, and back in Canaan they follow the customs of their culture, and the traditional mourning period for that day for them was seven days. Jacob would have wanted it that way. Jacob would have approved of his sons remaining a distinct people. They respected the Egyptian tradition, but they honored their own. Remember that they are forerunners of God's chosen nation, and for them, separation, not assimilation, is the appropriate choice when faced with the customs of another land.

[11 : 34] We can tell that the mourning must have been a sight to see, with the Egyptians apparently joining in. The Canaanites were so moved by it that they named the location because of it. The name given in verse 11 means either meadow of Egypt or mourning of Egypt.

The Canaanites apparently failed to notice that Hebrews were at the center of that mourning. So let's finish this section now by reading verses 12 through 14.

They say, Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them. For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place.

After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father. These verses are straightforward.

Joseph and his brothers did what their father requested. However, these verses are filled with irony for Joseph. Think about what happened. Joseph first made this journey as an obedient son, fulfilling the wishes of his father.

[12 : 45] And that is exactly what he was doing on the day that he was sold into slavery. Only this time he had companions. On his previous journey he was alone.

Now he traveled with his brothers and a band of Egyptians. And this time Joseph was leading a caravan as opposed to being hauled off by one. This time Joseph's brothers joined him as he pursued his father's wishes, as opposed to planning to kill him despite his father's love for him.

This time Joseph knows that he has now seen his ancestral home for the last time. The last time when Joseph went on this journey, he had no idea that he would never live in Canaan again.

So as we move into the second section of the lesson, we will see that the funeral trip also stirred some memories for Joseph's brothers. So having seen the funeral in the first section, the second section will show us the forgiveness.

So the forgiveness is what comes next. We see that forgiveness in verses 15 through 21. So let's read through verse 17 first.

[13 : 56] Verses 15 through 17 say, When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.

So they sent a message to Joseph saying, Your father gave this command before he died. Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin because they did evil to you.

And now please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father. Joseph wept when they spoke to him. We could have called this section the fear instead of the forgiveness because the fear that comes from Joseph's brothers dominates the verses that we just read.

And we'll also see that fear in verse 18. The brothers have been living in Egypt for more than 17 years now. During that time, Joseph has been ensuring that the brothers and their families have been well cared for.

When the family first moved to Egypt, Joseph promised to provide for them. And he has kept that promise all these years. We see here though that throughout the entire time, the older brothers must have been tormented by their guilty consciences.

[15 : 08] Their conversation here shows that they've never fully embraced Joseph's forgiveness. The older brothers show that they've suspected that Joseph's kindness toward them had an ulterior motive.

Perhaps that ulterior motive was to avoid causing their father more grief while Jacob was still alive. Now that Jacob is gone, there's nothing hindering Joseph.

Or at least that's what they're worried about. Look again at the message the brothers sent to Joseph. It said, Your father gave this command before he died. Say to Joseph, Please forgive the

transgression of your brothers and their sin because they did evil to you.

This statement, purportedly from Jacob, is documented nowhere in scripture. Most commentators believe that the older brothers made up this statement to capitalize on Joseph's desire to please their father.

Most likely, it really is a lie that was created by the brothers. The focus on Joseph at the beginning of the chapter showed how close he was to his father. If Jacob had wanted to give Joseph such a message, Jacob almost certainly would have given Joseph that message directly before he died.

[16:20] Regardless, though, of whether Jacob made the statement that is ascribed to him here, the older brothers' actions have proved that they have yet to fully trust Joseph. For more than 17 years, the older brothers have been just waiting for Joseph to get his revenge.

The end of verse 17 says that Joseph wept when he received the message from his brothers. You probably remember as we've progressed through this study that we've seen Joseph cry a lot.

Here he's crying because he now realizes that his older brothers have yet to fully trust him. He probably thought, What more must I do for them to fully accept that I have forgiven them?

Joseph had spent a few years in an actual prison. The older brothers had been living many years in a prison of their own making. It's a prison created by their guilt.

And we see more evidence of that guilt in verse 18. Look at verses 18 and 19. They say, Other than Joseph's tears, we have no details about how Joseph responded to the message that the brothers sent to Joseph in verses 16 and 17.

[17:40] Whatever the response was, the older brothers felt just confident enough to approach Joseph in person now. Verse 18 shows, though, that they were still fearful of what Joseph might do.

And Joseph replaces that fear with forgiveness. And that is why forgiveness is the heading for this section instead of fear. From verse 15 through the end of the chapter, we hear very little from Joseph himself.

But notice one thing every time we hear from Joseph. Every time Joseph does speak, he reaffirms his trust and confidence in God. Every time he speaks from now until the end of the chapter, he references God in whatever he says.

And the first time we see that is in verse 19. Joseph directs the older brothers' attention away from himself to the sovereign God who rules their history. He's aware of the limits of his own authority.

And Joseph fully respects the limits that he has. Joseph and his brothers have had a reunion, but it's not until now that they truly experience reconciliation.

[18:47] Joseph's theology signs through as he responds to his brothers here. He continues his statement to his brothers in verse 20. And verse 20 is probably the most famous verse of this chapter.

And it also might be the most famous verse in the entire Joseph story. That is the verse where Joseph said, Joseph once again clings to the sovereignty and promise of God.

He says, As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring it about that many people shall be kept alive as they are today. He can never think about his journey without acknowledging that it was exactly what God had intended it to be.

He's neither bitter nor angry here. Think about how consistent Joseph is. Way back when he revealed himself to his brothers in Genesis chapter 45, he explained there that while the brothers sold him to Egypt, God actually sent him there.

Here's what Joseph told his brothers in Genesis 45, verses 1 through 8. It says, Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him.

[20:10] He cried, Make everyone go out from me. So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.

And Joseph said to his brothers, I am Joseph. Is my father still alive? But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. So Joseph said to his brothers, Come near to me, please.

And they came near, and he said, I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here. For God sent me before you to preserve life.

For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will neither be plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on

earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.

So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Now here we are, 17 years later, and Joseph has just echoed his original remarks that he said in chapter 45.

[21 : 22] That's really the key to Joseph's life, and particularly his ability to forgive. That key is that he's able to see God as the sovereign administrator over the events of his life.

He can rise above the pettiness and the wrongdoings, no matter how severe those wrongdoings were. Genesis 50, 21 has the close of Joseph's statement to his brothers, and his words are followed by a summary statement from Moses.

Joseph said, So do not fear. I will provide for you and your little ones. Moses then adds this comment, Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Joseph reconciled with his brothers. He forgave them. He relinquished his right to punish them for what they had done. He canceled the debt. So he was a perfect picture of Paul's words in Ephesians 4, 31 and 32, before Paul even wrote those words.

And here are Ephesians 4, 31 and 32. They say, Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

[22 : 31] Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Time and the Lord have erased the sting of 39 years ago in the pit, but the older brothers' recent display of mistrust really hurt Joseph.

Joseph responds to his brothers with kindness again, though. He assures them of his continued provision for them, and his brothers will see Joseph reflect the love of God, and they will know that the forgiveness is real.

So in this section, Joseph demonstrated the main idea. We saw him rely on God's providence as he comforted and confirmed his forgiveness of his brothers.

So even though Joseph has demonstrated the main idea, some important verses remain. So we've seen the funeral and the forgiveness. In the final section of tonight's passage, we have five more verses to cover, and in those verses, we see the farewell.

So the farewell is the last part. Here are verses 22 through 26 again. They say, So Joseph remained in Egypt, he in his father's house.

[23 : 45] Joseph lived 110 years, and Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation. The children also of Manasseh, the son of Manasseh, were counted as Joseph's own.

And Joseph said to his brothers, I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here. So Joseph died being 110 years old.

They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. All of a sudden, we go really fast in these last few verses. Moses summarizes more than 50 years in these last few verses.

Joseph was approximately 56 years old when the last section ended. We learn in verse 22 that Joseph lived until he was about 110 years old.

[24 : 44] So the verses lack a lot of detail, but we have some important information about what happened during that time. The years obviously contained some pleasing and proud moments for Joseph.

He became a grandfather and a great-grandfather. Verse 23 tells us that Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's children. And it also says that at their birth, the children of Manasseh's son, Manasseh, were counted as Joseph's own.

And that is similar to how Jacob had claimed Ephraim and Manasseh as his own children. In verses 24 and 25, we hear Joseph's last recorded words.

He said, So as Joseph prepared to depart this earthly life, he was looking forward to the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham.

He firmly and fully believed that the time was coming when the descendants of his brothers will leave Egypt to occupy the promised land again. And when that happens, he wanted his bones to be present.

[25 : 58] The writer of Hebrews highlighted this point when he wrote about Joseph in the Hall of Faith passage. Hebrews 11.22 says, Joseph was neither the promised seed nor was he the central focus of God's redemptive plan.

However, he was, by God's grace, a child of God who was a picture of faithfulness. Because of that, God was with him. God was gracious toward him. And nowhere is that more evident than in the final paragraph of the book of Genesis.

Judah was the one identified as the son of promise. Judah was the reason Joseph came to Egypt. Judah is the one who's going to lead the family and to carry on the line that will culminate in the Messiah.

But in the last paragraph, Joseph stands in the place of the family patriarch. Consider how much that mirrors the end of Jacob's life. Joseph lived more than a century.

He was blessed to see his great-grandchildren. Joseph reiterated the promises to his descendants. Joseph made his kinsmen swear to take his bones back to the promised land.

[27 : 17] And Joseph also underwent Egyptian embalming. It is important to note that Joseph is not buried in Egypt, though, at this time. His body is placed in an unburied coffin, which will remind the sons of Israel that Egypt is not their home.

Every time they moved, they took the bones of Joseph with them. One day, as the unburied body of Joseph is meant to signify, God is going to bring the children of Israel back into the land of Canaan. The sons of the brothers who sold Joseph into Egyptian slavery will be delivered from Egyptian slavery themselves. 400 years later, they're going to leave Egypt and they'll carry Joseph's bones back with them to the land promised to their fathers.

Can you imagine keeping track of somebody's bones for 400 years? Exodus 13.19 tells us about Joseph's remains being carried out of Egypt.

Here's what Exodus 13.19 says, Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones with you from here.

[28 : 31] So every time they went somewhere, somebody had to say, did anybody grab Joseph? Joshua finally buried Joseph's bones in Shechem.

Listen to Joshua 24.32. Joshua 24.32 says, As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem in the piece of land that Jacob brought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of money.

And yes, Hamor and Shechem referenced there were the same Hamor and Shechem that figured so prominently in the horrible events in Genesis chapter 34. So Genesis 50 records the end of Joseph's life.

The chapter also records the end of Genesis. We already know, however, that the end of Genesis is far from the end of the story. Joseph knew that his nation would one day leave Egypt and carry forward the great seed project that had started with Abraham and would keep going until the seed himself, God incarnate, would come to planet Earth and provide salvation for the world.

By doing so, that promised seed, who we know as Jesus Christ, would bring in the great blessing promised to the patriarchs. We typically have ended each lesson by considering some things that we can take away from the passage in addition to the main idea.

[29 : 58] We're going to do that again tonight, but we're going to do it a little bit differently. We're going to look at some events in chapter 50 to ask ourselves some rhetorical questions.

Back in verses 15 through 18, we saw how after more than 17 years, Joseph's older brothers had yet to fully accept Joseph's forgiveness of their sins.

We easily can think, how could the brothers doubt Joseph's forgiveness despite the overwhelming evidence otherwise? But here's the first question for us to ponder.

Do we accept God's forgiveness of our own sins or do we let lingering guilt cause us to doubt? Do we accept God's forgiveness of our own sins or do we let lingering guilt cause us to doubt?

How many times do you think God might think, how can they doubt that I forgive them despite overwhelming evidence otherwise? Christ is always ready for you to receive him as Savior.

[31 : 00] After that, you'll be totally free, eternally reconciled to God. How often we preach about the cross of Jesus Christ and his ability to forgive, but we deny that his grace is continuous and that his salvation is everlasting.

The fact is that Christians are forgiven forever. Jesus himself said this in John 10, 27 through 30. Jesus said, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the

Father's hand.

I and the Father are one. So we talked about how Joseph probably thought, What more must I do for my brothers to fully accept that I have forgiven them?

Can Jesus say the same thing about us? Don Anderson wrote, Once we are born again, we will never be unborn. We cannot forfeit our positions as children of God, but how it must grieve the Lord when we forget that he has cleared us to be righteous in his sight.

[32 : 15] Like Joseph, God holds no grudges. For true believers, we should rest in the assurance that God wants us to have. From chapter 45 until the end of Genesis, we've seen evidence that Joseph truly forgave his brothers.

That forgiveness was evident again in tonight's passage when we covered Genesis 50 verses 19 through 21. So the thing for us to remember is to avoid being like Joseph's brothers.

We need to embrace the forgiveness that God has given to us through Jesus. Here's the second question to ponder. Do we forgive others who have wronged us like Joseph forgave his brothers? Do we forgive others who have wronged us like Joseph forgave his brothers? Just as Joseph was called to forgive his brothers, we also are called to forgive the wrongs against us.

And we saw that when we read Ephesians 4, 31 and 32. Moving on, we talked about how Genesis 50, 20 is the most famous verse of this chapter and perhaps the most famous verse of the Joseph narrative.

[33 : 25] Of course, that's the verse that says, As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today.

So here's the next question for us to ponder. Do we understand that when something bad happens to us, God means it for our ultimate good? Do we understand that when something bad happens to us, God means it for our ultimate good?

Commenting on Genesis 50, 20, one pastor said that we need to develop 50, 20 vision. In other words, we always need to have that verse in mind as we face difficulties.

We quote and sometimes misquote Romans 8, 28 when we think about something like that. And Paul wrote to the Romans there, Paul never says that all things are good.

He says that for those who love God, all things work together for good. The idea is that God is working in the lives of his people to conform them to the image of Christ.

[34 : 38] And we learn that from Romans 8, 29. Romans 8, 29 says, For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

When we read Romans 8, 28, we should always think about it in reference to verse 29. God often uses hardships in our lives to teach us truths that we could learn no other way.

Sometimes the hardships provide us with assurance of our faith because when our faith holds in the difficult times, we have evidence that our faith is real. Regardless of why God allows hardships and difficulties in believers' lives, God's ultimate purpose is to make us more like Christ.

And that is why Paul could say that all things work together for good. The fourth and final question for us to think about is this. Do we realize that Joseph was never the main point of Genesis chapters 37 through 50?

Do we realize that Joseph was never the main point of Genesis chapters 37 through 50? If we focus just on Joseph, we miss the bigger picture.

[35 : 54] That bigger picture extends throughout history. More than that, the bigger picture covers the past, the present, and the future. The bigger picture also includes all believers, past, present, and future.

The main point of the book of Genesis is to show the progression of redemptive history, how God will redeem his people from the curse of sin. Throughout Genesis, including Genesis 37 through 50, we've seen God show that he's faithful to preserve the line of the seed who will redeem God's people.

We've seen a glimpse of the Savior to come. We know now that he's the Lion of Judah. No longer should we limit the Joseph narrative to just the story of a boy who prospered far away from home. Joseph was a player in a much more significant drama. God used Joseph in his plan to redeem Judah so that Judah's descendants would produce earthly kings and ultimately lead to the king of kings, Jesus, who of course is the redeemer of God's elect.

Let's personalize it a little more. God used Joseph so that Jesus could one day come and redeem you, me, and all true Christians who have repented of their sin.

[37 : 10] That same redemption will be extended to all of those in the future who repent of their sins and put their faith in Christ. Joseph certainly was a person who accomplished more for God than any of us ever will and his faith stands as a great example for believers today.

But despite the great ways that God used Joseph, Joseph himself would tell us that he was a small part of God's much bigger plan. When we look at the complexities of the life of Joseph and compare them with God's larger dealings in history, we begin to understand a little of what Paul meant when he wrote Romans 11, 33-36.

Romans 11, 33-36 say, O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has been his counselor or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things.

To him be glory forever. Amen. There's perhaps no better way to summarize what we've learned during this study than to quote Romans 11, 33 one more time.

[38 : 28] That's the verse that says, O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for what you've shown us in tonight's passage and throughout this whole study of Joseph. Help us remember that Joseph was just a player in the much bigger plan that you have to redeem all believers, including us.

Let us use that knowledge to make us more joyful and more willing to tell others about you. Help us as we continue to apply what we've learned in our own lives. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.