

Series: A New Beginning; Sermon: A New Realization
Delivered by: Dr. Josh Moody, senior pastor; Date: June 4, 2017

Bible text explored: Genesis 50:15–26

¹When 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." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: ¹⁷Say 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. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As 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. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

²²So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's house. Joseph lived 110 years. ²³And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation. The children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were counted as Joseph's own. ²⁴And 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." ²⁵Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." ²⁶So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. [ESV]

Review and application:

1. Pastor Moody concluded his series on Genesis, the book of beginnings, by observing how it uses true stories to convey basic realities. What has it taught us about . . .
 - . . . the presence of evil in all humans?
 - . . . the nature of God's sovereign plan?How should this basic understanding shape our outlook and our commitments?
2. How did the brothers sending Joseph a message rather than calling on him (v. 15-17a) expose their fear of his retaliation once their father had died?
Would you guess that the content of their message was factual or fabricated?
3. What emotion (v. 17b) do you think caused Joseph to weep?
Do you think this response emboldened the brothers (v. 18) to visit Joseph face-to-face?
Whom may we need to reassure that our forgiveness is genuine and ongoing?
4. What primary realization (vv. 19-21) allowed Joseph to forgive his brothers for their spiteful actions?
Why did Joseph need to repeat what he'd already told them? (See *Gen. 45:7-8*.)
How did he make clear that he wasn't sweeping their offenses under the rug?
But what bigger divine plan did he acknowledge?
Has worshipping a God who loves us in spite of our evil empowered us to react to wrongs with humility, kindness, and comfort?
How will this validate the gospel to a watching world?
5. What was the basis (vv. 22-26) for Joseph's insistence that "God will visit you" and that his body be transported to the Promised Land? (See *Gen. 12:1-3, 6* and *Heb. 11:22*.)
How did the ultimate site of Joseph's tomb at Shechem tie together the ongoing strands of God's covenant? (See *Exod. 13:19* and *Josh. 24:32*.)
6. How does this trusting, confident commitment to God's plan for us contrast with the bucket-list mentality of our contemporary culture?

*These are the last sermon-based questions to be issued before a summer break.
Distribution of the questions is expected to resume with the August 20 sermon.*