

GENESIS

God's unveiling plan of Redemption and Blessing

The Freedom of Total Forgiveness (Genesis 50:15-21)

READ Gen 50:15-21 and **LISTEN** to Pastor Craig's [sermon](#).

After Jacob died, his sons feared reprisal from Joseph for having sold him into slavery many years before, despite Joseph forgiving them 17 years earlier. In response to their request for forgiveness, Joseph was grieved and reminded them of God's sovereign rule over their action. As a result, God brought it about "that many people should be kept alive" (v. 20). In the end Joseph alleviated their fears and comforted them that he would provide for them and their little ones.

Main Lesson: Total forgiveness brings true freedom and means letting the offender off the hook and seeking their good.

Questions:

1. Why do you think people find it so difficult to forgive those who have hurt them? Do you find it difficult to forgive? Why?
2. What did the brothers fear from Joseph as a response to their actions (v. 15)? Was that a reasonable conclusion? Why/why not?
3. Should we only forgive those who acknowledge fault? Explain. See vv. 16-18; Matt 6:12, 14-15; Mark 11:25; Luke 17:3-4.
4. What is the difference between forgiveness and reconciliation, and why is that distinction important?

5. What debt did Jesus pay for you to be forgiven? See Isaiah 53:5; Gal 3:13. In what way is forgiveness akin to cancelling out a debt owed and how does remembering the forgiveness we have received in Christ help us forgive?
6. When someone hurts us, we may be tempted to make them "pay" rather than forgive them. What are some ways we might try to make others pay for the hurt they caused? Do you recognise any of these responses in yourself?
7. Joseph spoke of the terrible hardships he experienced as circumstances that God used for good (v. 20). How can a victim of rape, child abuse or some terrible crime honestly believe that God meant it for good?
8. How does Joseph's willingness to provide for and comfort his brothers show that forgiveness includes seeking the good of the offender (v. 21)? See Luke 6:27-28.
9. How does knowing God is sovereign over all people and events that bring us hurt and that He is loving help make forgiveness possible, freeing us from the enslavement of bitterness and anger (v. 20)? See 1 Peter 2:22.
10. From your study, write out a definition of biblical forgiveness. What are the key elements?

STOP AND PRAY:

Adore: the Lord who rules over all evil people and circumstances for our good

Thank: God for paying a sin debt in Christ which we could not possibly pay ourselves

Pray: that you would experience freedom by willingly forgiving those who hurt you