

A NEW BEGINNING: HOW TO SAY GOODBYE

Scripture used: [Genesis 41:51-52 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon started by praying for our nation, as we are witnessing three different crises: political mayhem, the pandemic, and grave injustice. We are all hoping that 2021 will offer a new beginning. To seize this opportunity, we have to say goodbye to the old, be faithful in the land of suffering, and submit to the process of God's redemptive work. But how do we say goodbye in a healthy and constructive way? In this message, we look at the practices and posture that will help us let go of what has come before and be prepared for a healthy new beginning.

KEY POINTS

- 1) Restoration starts with letting go. But trauma makes it hard to let go of old wounds. Trauma can be circumstantial (mistreatment we've experienced, harm that has befallen us) or relational (wounding or broken trust from a relationship). Trauma manifests with flashbacks, haunting visions, anger... In our passage of Scripture, we learn that Joseph was Jacob's favorite son, which attracted the intense jealousy of Joseph's brothers. They hated him and wanted to do harm and violence to him. After almost killing him, they trafficked him and made him disappear. Thus, Joseph was a victim of both circumstantial and relational harm.
- 2) We must first acknowledge an ending before we can get a new start. We have to honestly accept and recognize when an assignment, a person, or a relationship is gone for good. This means accepting what has occurred in the past, and what has been lost, in its totality and utter finality. A benediction is a means of closure. "Goodbye" comes from the Old English for "God be with you," and there are some things that, instead of trying to regain, we need to entrust into God's hands.
- 3) Joseph was upset as he was longing for the ideal family that he never had to begin with, and for fear of what he would have to endure. He had to build a new life in a series of new communities and environments. He took his feelings and questions to God. This is the way to spiritual healing, for finding peace in our soul.
- 4) [Lamentations 2:19](#) reminds us to pour out our hearts to the Lord. [John 11:32-35](#) tells us that Jesus wept when faced with all the inequities and distress of the world, a presage to Gethsemane and the cross. Before the ending, we must navigate an in-between space, and it helps to do so with "compass words, verses of Scripture that anchor us to God's trustworthiness and direction for our lives. Some verses to consider for this purpose are [Jeremiah 31:3](#), [Jeremiah 29:11-13](#), [Romans 8:28](#), [Psalm 30:5](#), and [Philippians 4:13](#). We are not lost, we don't wallow in the emotions of yesterday, we are going somewhere. [Deuteronomy 31:6](#) reminds us NOT to be afraid as the Lord travels with us. We reframe the story from being broken victims to being survivors and victors, those who are being redeemed and saved by grace.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Has there been a "Compass Verse" that has been significant in your life? If so, share it with others in your group and the difference it has made. If it isn't a verse from Scripture, is there a conviction about God that you hold onto? What keeps you moving forward in a God-oriented direction?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider the major highlights of Joseph's life in [Genesis 37-41](#). How did he suffer circumstantial trauma? How did he suffer relational trauma? What are the areas of pain in your life right now that have roots in the past? Are there areas of trauma or pain that you need to "say goodbye" to and release to God? What would it look like for you to bring these to Jesus, to entrust them to Him, and to move forward with God's promises for the future?
- 3) **DO** - Consider reading "Praying our Goodbyes" by Joyce Rupp to learn more about God's process of letting go and becoming an expression of God's loving presence in the world. Choose a "compass verse" for this season to hold onto. Where there is past pain or trauma, practice entrusting the source of that pain to God, and praying "God be with you" to those who have harmed you. See you next Sunday!