

Genesis 45 - Joseph Reveals Himself; The Brothers Return to Get Jacob

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(4) Life of Joseph (Gen 37:1—50:26)

(C) Jacob and Joseph's brothers go to Egypt (Gen 42:1—47:26)

(b) Brothers' second trip to Egypt (Gen 43:1—45:28)

(iii) Joseph discloses his identity (45:1-28)

(a) Joseph's revelation (45:1-15)

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Genesis 45

(b) Brothers' second trip to Egypt (Gen 43:1—45:28)

(iii) Joseph discloses his identity (45:1-28)

(a) Joseph's revelation (45:1-15)

1 Then Joseph could not control himself in front of everyone standing before him, and he shouted, "Have everyone leave me!" So there was no one with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

1 Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, "Have everyone go out from me." So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

1 At this point, Joseph could not control his emotions any longer, so he cried out to everyone who was standing nearby, "Everybody! Leave me!" As a result, none of his staff was anywhere near him when he revealed himself to his brothers.

1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

- After Judah's touching intercession for Benjamin, Joseph was overcome with emotion, and could not continue the play acting

2 Then he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *about it*.

2 He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *of it*.

2 He cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, including Pharaoh's household.
2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.
- The Hebrew literally reads: "He gave forth his voice in weeping"

3 And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were terrified in his presence.
3 Then 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.
3 Joseph blurted out, "I'm Joseph! Is my father really alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, because they had become terrified to be in his presence.
3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.
- Joseph's question about Jacob was not really one of doubt, but one of affirmation
- The brothers were speechless, in a state of shock at Joseph's revelation

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." And they came closer. And he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold to Egypt.
4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." And they came closer. And he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.
4 Joseph implored his brothers, "Please come close to me." So they did.
"I'm your brother Joseph, whom you sold into slavery in Egypt!" he told them.
4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for **God sent me ahead of you to save lives.**
5 Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.
5 "But don't be distressed or angry at yourselves because you sold me here, because God sent me ahead of you all in order to deliver us.
5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.
- "...God sent me ahead of you to save lives" - Joseph quickly took from their shoulders all the blame for an ugly deed, as he sought to interpret to them the plan and purpose of God
— It was his way of centering their attention on the one supreme consideration: the providential purpose of God was more significant than any minor act of mortal man
— That purpose involved preserving alive a remnant who could be used to work out the Lord's will on the earth

- This verse focuses on the plan of God, showing the interplay between human agency and divine agency

— The human agency was the brothers selling him to slavery in Egypt

— The divine purpose was accomplished through human agency

6 For the famine *has been* in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.

6 For the famine *has been* in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.

6 That's because this famine has been going on for two years now in this region, and there are still five years left, during which there won't be any plowing or harvesting.

6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest.

- Joseph spelled out the necessity of the plan, in both the past and in the future

- At this time, Joseph was 39 years old, and had been away from his brothers for 22 years

7 So God sent me ahead of you to **ensure for you a remnant** on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.

7 God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.

7 God sent me ahead of you to keep you alive on the earth, and to save you all in a magnificent way.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

- Joseph now reveals God's divine plan...

- "...ensure for you a remnant" - displays Joseph's complete understanding and faith in the Abrahamic Covenant and its promise of a nation

— First notion of the "Remnant": Joseph's brothers meant to harm him, but God's purpose was "to preserve for you a posterity (remnant) on the earth"

8 Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me **a father to Pharaoh** and lord of all his household, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

8 Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

8 As a result, it wasn't you who sent me here, but God himself! He established me as a father-figure to Pharaoh himself! I'm in charge of his entire palace and ruler over the entire land of Egypt.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

- Once again, Joseph describes the relationship between human and divine agency in God's plan

— Here he shows the limits of human agency: "it was not you that sent me hither"

— Ultimately, it was not the brothers who sent him to Egypt: it was God

- Joseph also recognized that it was in the plan of God for the preservation of Israel to be accomplished in Egypt

— This is why Joseph was strong in instructing the brothers to retrieve their father and the rest of the family and travel to Egypt

- "...a father to Pharaoh" - instead of the Hebrew *av*, this is likely a Hebrew transliteration of the Egyptian word for *vizier* (which sounds like *av*)

— A *vizier* performed a valuable function and held a high position; in this case, "lord of all Egypt" (v9)

- He who is spiritual can perceive the hand of God in every event, and therefore is able to forgive those who wrong him

9 Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.

9 Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.

9 So hurry up, go back to my father, and tell him that his son Joseph tells him, 'God has made me master of all of Egypt.

Hurry up! Come live with me!'

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

10 For you shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your grandchildren, and your flocks and your herds and all that you have.

10 You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have.

10 You are to live in the land of Goshen, near where I am—you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and everything that you own.

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine *to come*, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished."

11 There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine *to come*, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished."

11 I'll provide for you there, since there are still five years of famine left to go, and you, your households, and everything you own would have otherwise become impoverished.

11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

- They could settle in the land of Goshen, which was about 40 miles from the site of present-day Cairo [the district of Rameses (47:11; Cf. Ex 1:11)]

— Situated in the delta of the Nile, this eastern section was the best of the land for herds and flocks. It was also near On and Memphis, where Joseph himself lived.

— They were still a rich family, but if they stayed in Canaan, they would be reduced to poverty at the end of five years

12 Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you.

12 Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you.

12 "Look, now! All of you can see me! And my own brother Benjamin can tell that it's really me speaking to you!

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

- The point was that Jacob may not believe the other brothers, but he would certainly believe Benjamin

13 Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here."

13 Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here."

13 So go tell my father about all of my splendor in Egypt. Tell him about everything that you've seen. Be quick about it, and bring my father down here!"

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck.

14 Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck.

14 Then he threw his arms around Benjamin and wept as they embraced.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 And he kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.

15 He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.

15 He kissed all of his brothers and wept with them, too, and then his brothers were able to talk with him.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

- Finally the brothers were reunited, first Joseph and Benjamin, then all of them

— Those were emotion-filled moments, filled with weeping and then conversation

— Their previous hatred and jealousy of Joseph was now gone

(b) Pharaoh's instructions (45:16-20)

16 Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants.

16 Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants.

16 As soon as the news reached Pharaoh's palace that Joseph's brothers had arrived, Pharaoh and his servants were ecstatic.

16 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your livestock and go to the land of Canaan,

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan,

17 Pharaoh told Joseph, "Be sure to tell your brothers, 'Do this: load up your livestock, go back to the land of Canaan,

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

18 and take your father and your households and come to me; and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.'

18 and take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land.'

18 get your father and your households, and come back to me. I'll give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can live off the abundance of the land.'

18 And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

- Pharaoh was not giving them any options here

19 Now you are ordered, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come.

19 Now you are ordered, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come.

19 In addition," Pharaoh ordered, "Do this: take some transport wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones to ride in, along with your wives, and bring your father and come!

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

- Pharaoh provided for the weaker family members: Jacob, who was now old, the wives and children, to be transported in Egyptian wagons instead of walking on foot

20 And do not concern yourselves with your property, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

20 Do not concern yourselves with your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

20 Don't worry about your household goods, because the best of all the land of Egypt is yours."

20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

- Pharaoh also instructed them to not be concerned about their material belongings, as they could have anything they desired in Egypt

- This invitation shows the high regard and respect Pharaoh had for Joseph; he did not know any of the family personally, but treated them like family

— Such an invitation from an Egyptian Pharaoh for Semites was only possible during the Hyksos's rule. Later Egyptian Pharaohs would have never allowed this to take place.

— The Hyksos, being Semitic conquerors of Egypt and ruling at this point in time, made it possible for another Semitic family to be warmly welcomed into Egypt

(c) Joseph's provision (45:21-24)

21 Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey.

21 Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey.

21 So Israel's sons did what they were asked to do, and Joseph provided wagons for them, as Pharaoh had commanded. He also gave them provisions for the journey.

21 And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.

22 To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of* silver and five changes of garments.

22 To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of* silver and five changes of garments.

22 He gave each of them some changes of clothes, but he also gave Benjamin 300 pieces of silver and five changes of clothes.

22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

- Joseph provided for their roundtrip with wagons to carry the family, food for the trip, and clothing

— Joseph shows favoritism to Benjamin by giving him additional clothing, along with 300 pieces of silver

23 And to his father he sent the following: ten male donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and sustenance for his father on the journey.

23 To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey.

23 He sent his father ten male donkeys loaded with the best of Egyptian goods and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provisions for his father during the journey.

23 And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

- Joseph also sent along provisions for Jacob and the entire household to travel down to Egypt

24 So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, "Do not quarrel on the journey."

24 So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, "Do not quarrel on the journey."

24 Then Joseph sent his brothers away, and they left for home. As they were leaving, Joseph admonished them, "Don't quarrel on the way back!"

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

- Joseph gave the brothers a sense of urgency: do not argue with accusations and recriminations during the trip; they had business to attend to, and it had to be completed

(d) Explanation to Jacob (45:25-28)

25 Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan, to their father Jacob.

25 Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob.

25 So Joseph's brothers left Egypt and returned to the land of Canaan and to their father Jacob,

25 And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father,

26 And they told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." But he was stunned, for he did not believe them.

26 They told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." But he was stunned, for he did not believe them.

26 where they informed their father, "Joseph is still alive! As a matter of fact, he's ruling the entire land of Egypt." But Jacob didn't believe them, because he had become cynical.

26 And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

- Even though Scripture is silent on the matter, this would've been a good time for the sons to confess their sin to Jacob

27 When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, then the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

27 When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

27 However, as soon as his sons had told him everything Joseph had said, and after he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent along to carry him, their father Jacob's spirit was encouraged.

27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

28 Then Israel said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

28 Then Israel said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

28 "It's enough," Israel replied. "My son Joseph is still alive. I'm going to go see him before I die!"

28 And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

- This royal invitation to Jacob, the old patriarch near the end of hope, and to the 10 brothers burdened with guilt, was a turning point in their lives and a fulfillment of God's prediction (15:13-16) that they would go into isolation in a foreign country and multiply without losing their identity.