

Chapter 45

Read and meditate on Genesis Chapter 45 this week
and prayerfully answer the following questions before Tuesday's class

Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers and the family will be reunited again.

Verses 1,2

Joseph lost it! He was about to burst! He held his feelings in for so long, but it was necessary to test his brothers' hearts. And now the big moment arrives, he could reveal his true identity.

This was a personal moment for Joseph and his family, so he asked his attendants to leave. No doubt the attendants were wondering "What's going on?"

This is one of the most dramatic recognition scenes in all of literature.

1. Was there ever a wonderful situation you had to keep secret for a time? What was it?

When it was time to reveal it how did you feel? Look up Scripture that reflects the joy you had when you revealed the good news.

"These were tears of tenderness and strong affection, and with these he threw off that austerity, with which he had hitherto (beforehand) himself towards his brethren; for he could bear it no longer. This represents the Divine compassion towards returning penitents, as much as that of the father of the prodigal." John Wesley

2. Joseph's example of forgiveness is a beautiful picture of God's unmerited forgiveness towards us. Is there someone in your life that you are needing to extend forgiveness to? Is there someone in your life you need to humbly ask for forgiveness?

Verses 3-8

Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers and then asks them "is my father still living?" In Chapter 43:27,28 his brothers already answered that question. Joseph knew his father was still alive. Why would he ask this question? Whether he was looking for confirmation of this, or he just forgot, it shows that Jacob was forefront in his Joseph's mind.

3. Why were Joseph's brothers "terrified in his presence"?

In verse 4, *"Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come close to me.'"*

"When Christ manifests himself to his people, he encourages them to draw near to him with a true heart." - Matthew Henry

Joseph confronted his brothers about their sin against him, but he also lovingly told them not be so hard on themselves because what happened was in God's hands all along. Verse 8 *"it was not you who sent me here, but God."*

Joseph exhibits great maturity of faith as he understands that God is sovereign over all his circumstances. Joseph, one who suffered much at the hands of his brothers, puts no guilt on them as he can see that God allowed it for His purposes.

4. What Scriptures can you find that speak of God's sovereignty over all things?

5. When you are in the position to confront someone about their sin what does the Bible say about how you should speak to them? Share your verse.

6. When you are the one being confronted about your sin, how should you to handle it? Find Scripture to confirm your answer.

Verses 9-11

New living arrangements. Joseph told his brothers about his position in Egypt, that he has a place for them to live (near himself) and that he will provide for all of them including their families. Five more years of the famine are still to come. He says, “go back and tell Dad”.

7. Do you think Joseph’s brothers remembered the dreams he had many years before? What were those dreams that have now come to pass? Genesis 37

Do you think Joseph’s brothers needed convincing that the Egyptian ruler was their brother? Perhaps he had to show them some scars on his body from his past imprisonment? They may have needed some persuading.

Read John 20:24-29

Who else needed some persuading? _____

8. Can you imagine what might be going through the brothers’ minds as this scene unfolds before them? Do you think they struggled to comprehend it? How so? Have you ever encountered a situation when God’s mercy and grace overwhelmed you?

What a beautiful scene! Brothers embracing one another, weeping, and then, just talking. (Verse 15)

We should always keep the lines of communication open with all people. Does communication come easily for you, or do you have to work at it? Answer question 9 or 10 based on which one may need some attention.

9. Do you talk too much and not let others share? Is this something you need to work on? Search the Scriptures and memorize the one the Lord has for you.

10. Maybe you don't communicate at all, you might just shut down or put up a wall. This is not good either. Maybe this is something you need to work on. Write a prayer asking God to help you to be a better communicator.

Verses 16-20

Pharaoh and his officials heard the good news and were very pleased! Romans 12:15

Are you truly happy (pleased) when you hear of others good fortunes?

If not, what do you think the problem is? _____

The Source of Jealousy

Most likely, you have been caught off guard by a wave of jealousy at some point in your life. Was it a spiritual attack? Did the Enemy make you covetous? Was someone or something working to make you resentful?

The answer—which may surprise you— is no. Jealousy springs up from *within us*.

Read Galatians 5:17-21

“Pharaoh's invitation was as generous as it was because Pharaoh held Joseph in high regard. This is another excellent example of hospitality: giving the best that one has to a starving and needy family. Pharaoh's invitation was an invitation, not a command. Pharaoh had no authority to command Jacob to move into Egypt. Jacob was free to accept or reject this offer. If Jacob chose to accept it, he would be free to return to Canaan whenever he chose. ***The fact that Jacob's family could not leave Egypt once they settled there was due to a new Pharaoh's new policies concerning the Israelites as residents of Egypt. It was not due to the action of this Pharaoh*** (Sesostris III)”. Thomas Constable

“After about 300 more years in Egypt, a new dynasty came to power. Its kings did not acknowledge Joseph and his deeds to save Egypt (Ex 1:8). Therefore, all the Israelites but Moses were enslaved.” Nelson's

Verses 21-23

Joseph gave them, “new and handsome garments, which upon their coming into Pharaoh’s presence, and on other occasions, they might wear instead of those more old and homely ones, which they brought with them from Canaan.” Matthew Poole

How interesting that Joseph’s special “robe” had caused so much jealousy and hatred from his brothers; yet now, he is giving them all special robes of their own to wear.

They had torn his robe off him, dipped it in blood and presented it to Jacob decades ago. Now they will return to Jacob in the robes he gave them, to let their father know that his beloved son is alive. Read Luke 15:22

11. Read Revelation 1:13, 19:13,16, 6:11, 7:9, 22:14

What stood out to you regarding the robes mentioned?

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

12. Why does Joseph give them this instruction?

Read Titus 3:9, James 4:1, 2Timothy 2:23, 1Corinthians 3:3, Ephesians 4:31

13. What is the warning to Christians? Which verse was most meaningful to you and why?

Verses 26-28

Jacob’s Spirit is revived with the news of Joseph being alive.

When has the Lord revived your downcast Spirit?

PARALLELS BETWEEN JOSEPH AND JESUS

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The New Testament is in the Old concealed; the Old Testament is in the New revealed." - Augustine

The Old Testament points to Jesus Christ through foreshadows of situations and actions of several people. Joseph is one of those people. I imagine that Joseph and Jesus' conversations go way beyond small talk. After all, they shared many similar heartfelt experiences.

Here are some of the parallels between Joseph and Jesus:

- Both men were greatly loved by their fathers (Genesis 37:3; Matthew 3:17).
- As shepherds, they both took care of their father's sheep (Genesis 37:2; John 10:11, 27).
- Both Joseph and Jesus were sent to their brothers by their father (Genesis 37:13, 14; Hebrews 2:11).
- Both men were ridiculed and rejected by their brothers (Genesis 37:4, 19-20; John 1:11; 7:5).
- Both were sold for the price of a slave (Genesis 37:28; Matthew 26:15).
- Both were taken to Egypt (Genesis 37:25; Matthew 2:14, 15).
- Both were falsely accused and condemned (Genesis 39:13-20; Matthew 26:57-68; 27:11-25). Both were placed with two other prisoners; one was saved and the other lost (Genesis 40:2, 3; Luke 23:32).
- Both were bound in chains (Genesis 39:20; Matthew 27:2).
- Both men were 30 years old at the beginning of public recognition (Genesis 41:46; Luke 3:23) and were exemplary servants (Genesis 39:1-6; Philippians 2:7).
- Both were tempted. While both Joseph and Jesus didn't give into the temptation (Genesis 39:7-12; Matthew 4:1); Jesus also *never* sinned (Hebrews 4:15).

- Both were stripped of their robes (Genesis 37:23; Matthew 27:27-28). Joseph was thrown into a pit (37:24) and later cast into a dungeon (Genesis 39:20). Jesus was condemned to death before descending to hell (John 19:23; 1 Peter 3:18-20).
- Both forgave those who wronged them (Genesis 45:1-15; Luke 23:34).
- While men plotted evil against them (Genesis 37:20; John 11:53), God used it for good (Genesis 50:20; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9).
- Both saved not only their people, but also many others (Genesis 45:7; 50:20; Matthew 1:21; Luke 24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11).
- Because Joseph's actions helped the nations of the world survive the famine (Genesis 41:57), God partially fulfilled his promise to Abraham to bless all nations (Genesis 12:1-3). God completely fulfilled his promise to Abraham when Christ died for everyone's sin and commanded to "*make disciples of all nations. . .*" (Matthew 28:19).

Also, Judah suggested the idea of selling his brother (37:26-28); the Greek name for Judah is Judas (Mat. 1:2-3).

Take time to reflect on this comparison. In which ways does God want to work in you to make you more like Christ when you are faced with life's difficulties?

You will not have to share this answer with others.

Is there a circumstance in your life that has you struggling to understand how this could be part of God's purpose for your life? You are not alone! When we're in the middle of a difficult season, it's hard to see past that. That's where faith comes in. Right now, where you're at, what have you learned about God, yourself and others as you walk through this trial?
