

Over the past few weeks, we have seen that Joseph has finally revealed himself to his brothers. All had been forgiven of the past and the brothers had a glorious reunion. Joseph told them to go back and tell their father he was alive and they all can come back to Egypt and live with him. Joseph is going to provide the means of transportation for them to not only bring Jacob back to Egypt but all their loved ones.

The brothers returned to Canaan and told Jacob that Joseph was alive! Jacob was stunned! In verse 26 of Chapter 45 it was described as his heart went numb. This could also be described that he was about to pass out because the news was so unbelievable to him. It has been 22 years since he was handed the bloody coat to identify if it was Josephs or not.

It was too good to be true! The brothers told Jacob all the words Joseph said, for the son Jacob has been grieving for these past 22 years is alive, telling the family to come to Egypt to live with him. Jacob realized this was true and Jacob said:

Genesis 45:28

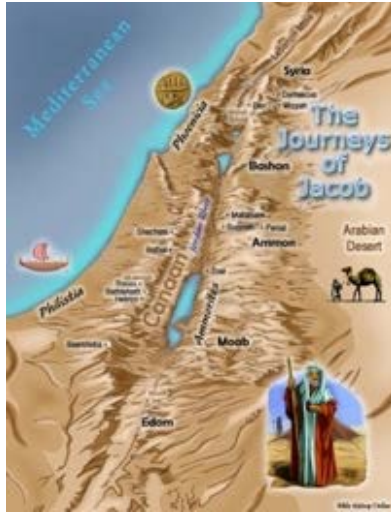
28 And Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Our focus changes from Joseph and the focus is on Jacob as Jacob and all the family, all the brothers, their wives, and their children, they load up on the wagons that Joseph provided, and they head to Egypt.

Let's read Genesis 46 and begin with verses 1 through 7.

Genesis 46:1-7

1 So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2 And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." 3 Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. 4 I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes." 5 Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6 They also took their livestock and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, 7 his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters. All his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.



Beersheba has a very significant place in the life of Jacob’s family. I don’t have time to go into much detail in each of these events that I am about to mention. So, I highly recommend that you go back and read them, not now, but later, so you can know more of the details of what happened.

Abraham and Sarah, Jacob’s grandparents. Abraham, the one who God promised would be the father of a great nation that God has chosen. The problem, Sarah was barren, and Abraham was very old. They were promised a son from God, but they had to wait. They didn’t wait on God and took matters into their own hands. Sarah gave her Egyptian servant, Hagar, for Abraham to have as a wife. Hagar became pregnant and gave birth to a son, Ishmael. But Ishmael was not the promised son.

Sarah did become pregnant through God’s promise and gave birth to Isaac, who is the promised Son. After Isaac because of certain events, Sarah, began to have great disdain for Hagar and Ishmael and she told Abraham to cast them away from their family. Upon God’s assuring Abraham that he would protect Hagar and Ishmael, Abraham sent them out with some bread and a skin of water.

In Chapter 21, we read that Hagar and Ishmael wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. The water ran out and Hagar laid Ishmael down and expecting them both to die, cried out with a great cry. Scripture does not say she cried out to God, but God heard her, and the boys crying as well and sent an angel to her to tell her she and the boy would not die, and God opened her eyes to a well of water and they lived.

We see in Chapter 21 as well that Abraham and Abimelech, King of Gerar, after having an argument over a well of water, made a covenant to not fight against each other and to deal kindly with each other in all their dealings. Because of the oath, that place was called “Beersheba”, meaning – Well of the Oath. Abraham then did this.

Genesis 21:33

³³ Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God.

In Chapter 26, we read that Isaac, because of a famine and other events in his life end up in Beersheba as well. While in Beersheba, God appears to Isaac and renews the covenant he made to his father Abraham about the descendants of Abraham being a great nation and now that promise will continue through Isaac.

Genesis 26:23-25

²³ From there he went up to Beersheba. ²⁴ And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for

my servant Abraham's sake. ²⁵ So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.

Jacob comes to Beersheba, and once again we see this become a place where there is worship of God as Jacob offers sacrifices of praise to God. God again shows himself to be faithful and strong in the life of Jacob and renews a covenant promised years ago with Abraham, Jacob's grandfather.

Remember the promise to Abraham was that he was to leave where he was living in Ur and go to a country that God would show him and give to Abraham. Then, there would begin a great nation of descendants that would come through Abraham's lineage.

Because of the famine they are now leaving this land and going back down to Egypt where nothing, but trouble has come to their family.

The sacrifices Jacob offered to God shows us he was calling out to God. God then calls out to Jacob and calms the fears or concerns Jacob had about going to Egypt. The promise would be fulfilled! A great nation would come from now Jacob and his sons. Not only would Jacob go down to Egypt, but he would return back to the land God promised Abraham. The promise, the covenant renewed with Isaac, and once again, renewed with Jacob.

God tells Jacob, I myself will go with you and you will die peacefully and the son whom you thought was lost will close your eyes at the time of your death and come to me.

If I counted correctly, and I am pretty sure I did. This is the 6th time that Scripture records Jacob and God having direct communication whether through a dream or Jacob calling out to God in prayer. Each time God was assuring Jacob that he was with him.

Through this portion of Scripture, how has Jacob been portrayed? Pretty despondent, fearful, in Chapter 37 it talked about Jacob being in mourning after believing Joseph was dead. When Jacob decided to let Judah take Benjamin back to Egypt, he talked about being bereaved. It was like, whatever, if I am to lose all my children so be it. Jacob gives indication of depression.

Now being despondent, fear, depression are real emotions and real places we can go in our minds. We can't take any of those emotions lightly.

I hope we see here in these verses though that God was there for Jacob as much as he was for Joseph. In Joseph's life and Jacob's life we see a dichotomy, two completely different positions or reactions to the situations they were both given.

Joseph latching on to God's promises and holding on to knowing who God is and though there may have been times of anger, times of questioning, Joseph continued to hold on to the fact that he is a child of God, and his steadfast love and favor was with him always. It is like he was saying these words from the song that is becoming quite a favorite around here.

*I don't know what You're doing
But I know what You've done
I'm fighting a battle that
You've already won*

Joseph's dreams had not come to fruition. Because of what God had already done in his life, he could look to God and trust that God would accomplish his promises in the future. Jacob went the other way. God, I don't know what you are doing, and he stopped. Jacob didn't latch on to God, he pushed God away.

Jacob had God's promise that a great nation would come from him and his descendants. It is not that he had to stop grieving over Joseph, but he had 11 other sons to love, teach, and get ready to lead this great nation that God had promised.

So, it is with us! May we take Joseph's path and remember who God is and his character and remember the promises of God. May we as it says in Psalm 136.

Psalm 136:1

¹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 34:18

¹⁸ The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

The word comfort in these verses is not just showing that you express sympathy. The Greek word for comfort here is:

Parakaleo – to call to one's side

To come alongside. First, God does not just come up to us and say, it is all going to be okay. No, he comes alongside, and he holds us up and he puts strength in our souls, and he catches the tears, and he says, I have you! Oh, daughter of mine, son of mine:

“Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest! Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

What we can do when we have difficult circumstances is focus on ourselves and the emotions and feelings we are experiencing. The first step we should take is towards God and we take in his promises and the fact of his character of mercy, grace, love, rebuke and be encouraged by his Word and through prayer as we call out to God as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did.

Did you catch in those verses this scenario though?

Things may be tough right now for you! God is seeking to or is comforting you in your affliction. Then in our affliction we are to come alongside someone else experiencing affliction and we are to comfort them with the same comfort God is comforting us with.

Don't forget the character of God! God is Eternal, Unchangeable, Holy, All Knowing, All Powerful, Loving, Full of Grace, Merciful, and Just! If you are unsaved, don't push him away to the point you never repent of your sins and end up in Hell because of your obstinate, prideful heart.

If you are saved, don't push him away to the point you don't bask in his presence and all that comfort, peace, and joy of the journey it is in being and abiding in Jesus Christ, John Chapter 15.

Jacob and his family head down to Egypt and we get a list of all who goes with him. Yes, we are going to try to read all those wonderful names.

Genesis 46:8-27

⁸ Now these are the names of the descendants of Israel, who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons. Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, ⁹ and the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. ¹⁰ The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. ¹¹ The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹² The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan); and the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. ¹³ The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Yob, and Shimron. ¹⁴ The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. ¹⁵ These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, together with his daughter Dinah; altogether his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three. ¹⁶ The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. ¹⁷ The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, with Serah their sister. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. ¹⁸ These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob—sixteen persons. ¹⁹ The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰ And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera the priest of On, bore to him. ²¹ And the sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. ²² These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob—fourteen persons in all. ²³ The son of Dan: Hushim. ²⁴ The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. ²⁵ These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and these she bore to Jacob—seven persons in all. ²⁶ All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own descendants, not including Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all. ²⁷ And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two. All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.

I do not really want to lose focus on what we are learning in this Chapter. But there is a topic here that I do want to cover because skeptics try to use this to say the Bible has errors and cannot be trusted. The first part is easy. If you go through the names, we just read you did get the total of 66 descendants that came down to Egypt with Jacob.

Then in verse 27 we see the number 70. Easy explanation. Jacob is not part of the 66 because he can't be a descendant of himself, and Joseph and his two sons were already in Egypt. Equally four more people.

$$66+4=70$$

Here is the supposed error. In Acts 7, when Stephen is brought before the High Priest and the Sanhedrin, as he gave testimony to why Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God, he went through the history of Jewish nation to get to the point of the true identity of Jesus Christ. In that testimony, Stephen said this as recorded in verse 14 of Chapter 7.

Act 7:14

¹⁴ And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob and his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all.

Just a few questions! What was the Old Testament originally written in? Hebrew

Greece became the world power in the 3rd Century B.C. in the year 334 B.C. by conquering Persia. Which was accomplished by Alexander the Great, that we have learned about on Sundays through our Daniel study. Greek became the predominant language of the time.

It was believed by some that it would be greatly advantageous to have the Hebrew Bible translated into Greek. The translation from Hebrew to Greek was completed in that time of the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. This Greek translation is called the Septuagint.

Because of this change, history shows us, and the many quotes from the Septuagint in the New Testament, the Septuagint was most often used by the 1st Century B.C. In fact, Jesus and the disciples quoted often from the Septuagint. This is what we see from Stephen in his comment about 75 people when he talked about the history of Joseph and Jacob. The Septuagint reads as this for Genesis 46:26-27.

Genesis 46:26-27 (Septuagint)

²⁶ And all the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, who came out of his loins, besides the wives of the sons of Jacob, all the souls were sixty-six. ²⁷ And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in the land of Egypt, were nine souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob who came with Joseph into Egypt, were seventy-five souls.

Now there are other thoughts of who is counted in the 66, 70, and 75. Some plausible, some not so plausible. The point here to make is that none of this gives any error or discrepancy towards absolute doctrine and truth in the Bible.

Jacob and his sons, and their families are now headed down to Egypt.

Genesis 46:28-34

²⁸ He had sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way before him in Goshen, and they came into the land of Goshen. ²⁹ Then Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. He presented himself to him and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. ³⁰ Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive." ³¹ Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. ³² And the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock, and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.' ³³ When Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' ³⁴ you shall say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,' in order that you may dwell in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."

Once again, we see Judah at the forefront of a part of this story. Literally he is at the forefront. The Lord has changed Judah so much that he has taken over leadership of the family. Jacob trusts him to the point that he sends Judah ahead to make sure Joseph knows they are on their way and to make sure, ultimately, where they are supposed to live.

Upon Judah telling Joseph they were on the way, Joseph could not wait for them to get to him, so he prepares his chariot by getting the horses hooked up to the chariot and off he goes. Do you think the chariot was moving with a little bit of speed?

Then Joseph gets to his Daddy! Reunited once again! A reunion of reunions! A son who was once thought to be dead but now alive, together with the father. A father that was longed for and a desire to see again.

In Jacob's mind, Joseph was dead to him, separated. In Joseph's mind he had the promise, the hope from God that one day he would see his family again. Joseph did not know how that was to come to be but for 22 years he had to lean on God's promises. Enslaved in one form or another.

But God! But God, was orchestrating the plan all along to once again, may I repeat myself, to grow Joseph in his faith and trust in God, to place Joseph in the right place. to save a nation from starvation and birth a nation that would become the focal point of all history and continues to be even today. To give time for God to work in

his brother's lives to change them. Out of those brothers, Judah, to change to a point that through his lineage would come the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

Before I get to a couple of my last points, we do have something to break down. Joseph told his family that he would talk to Pharaoh and tell him his father's household had come to Egypt and he would tell them they are shepherds. If asked by Pharaoh, they are to say the same.

Why? Several thoughts.

1. The obvious, in the portion of Scripture we read. Shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians. Maybe Joseph feared how they would be treated.
2. Just tell the truth guys! Lying and deceiving had been such a huge part of the family and caused such pain, turmoil, and anguish between family members. Just tell the truth! What is that old saying? ***Honesty is the best medicine.***
3. Egypt was a pagan nation that was immersed into idol worship. Maybe Joseph feared some would fall into following a false god.
4. This plan showed Pharaoh that his family could take care of themselves and would not be a burden to the nation.
5. Joseph knew that the Land of Goshen was the most fertile in the land at that time and would allow his families herds to grow.
6. Ultimately, Joseph used the wisdom God gave him because this was all of God's plan and the Nation of Israel would grow into the nation that God promised Abraham.

All this began when God called a pagan man out of the land of Ur to a land he would show him. Through many ups and downs God's faithfulness was shown up to the time a 17-year-old young adult, who was thrown into a pit and sold into slavery and was faithful to trust God through his trials and tribulations. One who was thought to be dead but now alive.

This thought of death to life and the title I gave tonight's teaching, Reunited, really had my mind going.

I thought about Abraham and Sarah. How they were promised a son and Abraham and Sarah both wondered how this was going to happen. Romans 4:19 shows where they considered this fact and how Abraham was described as his body all but being dead and unable to have children because of his age. Sarah because of her barrenness. But God, did a miracle and life came from them as they had the promised son Isaac.

Isaac the promised son! Then God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his one and only son and as Abraham had Isaac bound upon that altar then the knife raised, Isaac, all but dead at that point. But God, sent an angel, "Abraham, Abraham! Don't harm the boy! God sees that you feared God and would not withhold your only son. And, in the thicket a ram was caught to be used as a sacrifice and offering to the Lord for his faithfulness.

I thought of these instances as Jesus raised several people from death to life. I listed them out and the Chapter and verse where you can find these.

1. ***Mark 5 – Jairus, a Synagogue ruler. Jesus raised his daughter from death to life.***
2. ***Luke 7 – Widow of Nain. Jesus raised her only son who had died from death to life.***
3. ***John 11 – Lazarus. Jesus's good friend, he raised from death to life.***

What reunions took place after the dead were brought back to life.

We saw tonight the reunion of a father and son, in Jacob and Joseph. Well, there was another great reunion between "the" Father and "the" Son!

As God the Father looks at God the Son, he sees his very image and his very likeness. Holy, all knowing, all powerful, merciful, loving, and just. He tells him, son, I love you, but I also love the people I created. Because of their sin they are separated from us, and I need to provide a way back to us.

I need a sacrifice for the sins of a wicked, evil people. Son, it is you! You have done nothing wrong, you are sinless. As this sacrifice, you are going to see, and you are going to experience some of the most heinous, wicked things ever. Son, I am going to have to separate myself from you for a time. Will you go?

The son says, yes father, I will do it for you and for them, for I love them too!

This son is brought to a mountain that we know as Mount Calvary. Wood is strapped to his back in the shape of a cross. This son is hung there by having 3 spikes nailed into his body, two in his wrists and one through his feet. There was a hand raised again but this time there would be no substitutionary sacrifice caught in a thicket, for this son is the substitutionary sacrifice.

This son takes on and feels every bit of God's wrath upon sin as he hung on that cross and he would die. But in three days he would rise again in power and with all authority! From Death to Life! There would be another great reunion.

Hebrews 1:1-3

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways. God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification of sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Another great reunion between a father and a son, reunited.

Because of what that son went through and because of what that son did, it gives opportunity for another great reunion for each individual ever born in this world today.

All of humanity starts out in death!

Ephesians 2:1

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.

We are dead and we need to be brought to life. We are separated from God because of our sin and God desires that we be reunited with him.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

If you will or have repented of your sin, there is that first initial reunion of calling out to God to save your soul and surrender your life to Jesus Christ. To follow and obey as we continue to live on this earth right now. But as we are living here, we live with that longing, that hope of when we get to see Jesus.

Either by way of the grave or the rapture there is going to be this great reunion, like this picture.



We'll hear these words, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much. Enter the joy of your master!"

I have to give the other side of that. If you don't repent and surrender your life to the Lord Jesus, you will be reunited with Jesus not in a time of rejoicing but in judgment. You will hear the words, "Depart from me, you worker of iniquity, I never knew you!" I beg you repent and experience the greatest reunion that takes place in this world. A dead sinner, brought to life through Jesus Christ.