

The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture

Week 12: The Big Reveal

Scripture:

Genesis 45:1-15

Motivation (Why You Need This):

Where are we in the story?

- Jacob's sons returned to Egypt with Benjamin to get food (Genesis 43:1-18)
- Arriving back in Egypt, Joseph's brothers were invited to eat with Joseph, although his identity was still unknown (Genesis 43:19-34)
- When his brothers left for Canaan, Joseph tested them by having his silver cup placed in Benjamin's bag, accused them of stealing, and said that Benjamin would remain in Egypt as a slave (Genesis 44:1-17)
- Judah begged for Benjamin's release, offering himself in Benjamin's place so their father would not be crushed by the loss (Genesis 44:18-34)

When we enter Genesis 45, the back and forth is over.

Joseph has likely seen the change that has taken place in the heart of his brothers – the protection of their youngest brother and the care for their father, Jacob.

What we have is decades of built-up emotion as Joseph watched this story unfold.

Let's not forget how long it's taken Joseph to get to this point...

- He was **17** when he was sold into slavery (Genesis 37:2)
- He was **30** when he entered Pharaoh's service (Genesis 41:46)
- He led Egypt through **7 years of plenty** and **2 years of famine** (Genesis 42-44)

By Genesis 45, Joseph was approximately **39 years old** (**22 years** after his brothers had sold him into slavery).

How do we possibly process wrongdoing against us, or circumstances out of our control after so much *time, emotional stress, and life* has passed?

There is only one way – we must not see this as Joseph's story, but God's plan.

Information (What You Need to Know):

Joseph's reveal to his brothers...

▪ **Joseph reveals that he is the brother whom they had sold into slavery**

- ✓ Joseph was overcome with emotion

Genesis 45:1 (ESV) Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, "Make everyone go out from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. **2** And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.

- Joseph sent everyone away except his brothers
- The emotion of the moment was expressed through uncontrollable weeping

- ✓ Joseph stands face to face with his brothers with his identity fully known

Genesis 45:3 (ESV) And 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. **4** So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.

- He asks about the condition of his father, Jacob
- The brothers were stunned and speechless at finding out Joseph's identity
- Joseph invited them to come near

▪ **Joseph reveals that what has happened to him was God's plan**

Joseph speaks of his faith in God's plan...

- ✓ "Don't be angry at what you did"

Genesis 45:5 (ESV) And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here..."

- ✓ "God sent me here to preserve life"

Genesis 45:5 (ESV) "And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. **6** For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. **7** And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors."

- ✓ "You didn't send me here, God did"

Genesis 45:8 (ESV) "So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt."

- **Joseph told his brothers to return to Canaan and bring everyone to Egypt so they would be protected during the rest of the famine**

Joseph speaks about what he will do for them...

- ✓ “Tell our father that I am alive”

Genesis 45:9 (ESV) 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 tarry.

- ✓ “I will give all of you a place to live”

Genesis 45:10 (ESV) “You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.”

- ✓ “I will provide for you during the famine”

Genesis 45:11 (ESV) “There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.”

Application (What You Need to Do):

What happened after Joseph said all these things?

Genesis 45:14 (ESV) Then 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 upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

“Joseph was affectionate and loving to **all his brothers**. Joseph did not exclude those who had been especially cruel to him. His heart was open to his brothers, both as a group and as individuals.” – David Guzik

How is this possible after 22 years of separation for Joseph and 215 years since God had made promises to Abraham (land, nation, blessing)?

- **God used Joseph’s suffering to protect Abraham’s offspring** - the betrayal was real, but not the end of the story. God sent Joseph ahead to preserve life.
- **God was already doing what He promised in Genesis 12** - He was building a people for Himself and using this family to become a source of blessing.

Genesis 45 reminds us that God’s promises remain even when life looks broken. Human sin cannot cancel what God has promised to do.