

Genesis 45 • Joseph's Second Appearance

Introduction

Everyone has experienced being an innocent victim, of experiencing evil or sin or injustice at the hands of another without due cause or justification. If life provided an opportunity where the tables were turned so that **YOU** were in complete control and authority over **THEM**, what would you do? Have you ever said, "If I ever get the chance, I'll...(fill in the blank)?" How deeply do you believe that God is sovereign and supreme over **EVERYTHING**, even the evil, sins, and injustices committed against us? In a very real sense, Joseph is the Old Testament precursor of the New Testament teaching,

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28

¹Then 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. ²He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it. ³Then 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.

⁴Then 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.

⁵"Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For 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. ⁷God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. ⁸Now, 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.

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. ¹⁰You 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. ¹¹There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine to

[Read v.1-3]

Q: What happened the first time they saw Joseph on their previous trip to Egypt?

A: They did not recognize him.

Q: What is the significance of their recognition and reaction the second time he appears to them?

A: It's the teaching of Joseph as a "type" of Messiah. Christ is rejected by His brothers (Israel) at his first coming, but weep greatly at their recognition of Him at His Second Coming, something that is spoken of elsewhere in Scripture as well.

[Read v.4-15]

Q: What had Joseph's brothers believed concerning Joseph?

A: They thought he was probably dead, but that at the very least there was still God's punishment awaiting them for what they did to him. During their first visit they revealed:

Then they said to one another, "Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us." Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Now comes the reckoning for his blood."

Genesis 42:21-22

Q: But when Joseph sent them away he graciously (and secretly) returned their money to them by placing it in each of their sacks of grain. What was their reaction and why?

A: They said, "What is this that God has done for us?" (Genesis 42:28) They interpret everything negatively, knowing that they are worthy of punishment for their sin against Joseph so many years ago, even to this very day.

Q: How does Joseph explain the proper interpretation of the things that they did to him?

1. First, he comforts them both personally and with the fact that Joseph's calling is to "preserve life", not take it in revenge or for any other reason. He is extending his personal forgiveness.
 - a. "...come closer to me" (v.4)

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come, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.”

¹²“Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. ¹³Now 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.”

¹⁴Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.

¹⁶Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh’s house that Joseph’s brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. ¹⁷Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan,’ ¹⁸and 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.’” ¹⁹Now 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. ²⁰Do not concern yourselves with your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’”

- b. “...do not be grieved or angry with yourselves...” (v.5)
- c. “...God sent me before you to preserve life.” (v.5)

2. Second, he explains God’s working and intervention in detail, and in so doing extends God’s forgiveness to them.
 - a. “God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.” (v.7)
 - b. “...it was not you who sent me here, but God.” (v.8)
 - c. “...He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.” (v.8)
3. Third, he follows up with his personal assurance to continue acting in good faith according to God’s will on their behalf.
 - a. “...you shall be near me...” (v.10)
 - b. “...I will also provide for you...” (v.11)

Application: *What is there about how Joseph handled injustice and evil in his life—even at the hands of people he loved—that may apply to you right now? How should we go about seeking an answer to why something has been allowed to happen? How should we approach reconciliation with those that have committed sins against us? What should we learn from Joseph’s brothers in regards to the way we may have treated others?*

Q: What does Joseph’s response teach us about the Messiah?

A: In the same way, Christ comforts, reassures, and extends both forgiveness and the promise of future protection to all who accept Him at the point of recognition, regardless of their past.

Point: *People have focused on certain “signs” that will divulge for sure that the Last Days are in motion such as the rise of the beast, his mark, Jews returning to Israel, rebuilding the temple, and so on. Actually, the earliest and most reliable such sign that will occur is large-scale spiritual revival in Israel, when Jews begin to recognize and accept Jesus as Christ in overwhelming numbers.*

[Read v.16-20]

Q: What might the Egyptians’ reaction teach us about Israel and the Messiah?

A: That the church at large, mainly composed of Gentiles, should not only be the most happy to see Jews reconciled to Christ Jesus their mutual Messiah, but should facilitate every opportunity for this to occur.

Note: *There is a very false movement to “hasten” the Second Coming by Gentile organizations that facilitate moving Jews back to the physical land of Israel without “imposing” on them the preaching of the Gospel or conversion to Christianity. This is completely unbiblical and unsupported by this passage, wherein the Gentiles facilitate the reconciliation of Joseph and Jacob—representing Jesus and Israel—**NOT** restoration to the physical land of Israel.*

²¹Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. ²²To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. ²³To 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.

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

²⁵Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. ²⁶They 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.

²⁷When 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. ²⁸Then Israel said, “It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

[Read v.21-28]

Q: What is the deeper, spiritual meaning of Joseph giving his brothers each a new set of clothes?

A: Throughout the Bible, clean clothes symbolize being consecrated and purified for the presence of God, a teaching about salvation, justification, and sanctification. It indicates shedding of the old life (old, dirty garments) for the new (clean, new garments) that can only be given by the Lamb of God.

Q: What might be said about the 300 pieces of silver?

A: Silver always represents redemption throughout Scripture. It's a very powerful illustration of Christ's grace and forgiveness, to repay 10 tens times in forgiveness the amount that was originally paid to betray Him. Or in Joseph's case, 15 times the amount Judah received for selling him to the Ishmaelites.

Q: And the bread for the journey?

A: The spiritual sustenance provided through the Word of God.

Q: How is Jacob's reaction to the news of Joseph the same that everyone—Jew or Gentile—has concerning Jesus?

A: What was thought to be dead is found to actually be alive. It alludes to the work of the cross and resurrection, both in the person of Jesus and in each person that accepts the reality of that truth.

Overall Application

- *Do we sometimes allow our desire for personal justice in this life to outweigh our concern for others' eternal life? Do we know that personal conflict—if submitted to God—is something that can be used to reconcile not just human to human but human to God?*
- *Are we under the false assumption that the evidence of God's will at work in our life is limited to the presence of “good” things or circumstances that are going in our favor? How do we interpret negative circumstances or even outright injustices committed against us? Do we live like God is sovereign over **EVERYTHING**, even evil, and will work everything according to His good will?*
- *Do we treat the Old Testament with equality with the New Testament? Do we seek and embrace the foundation it lays for all that follows? Are we aware of all that is yet to be fulfilled? Do we bear the same burden for Israel's salvation in Christ that we do for our own race and culture?*