

GENESIS 45: JACOB'S FAMILY RESTORED

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. All families experience some sort of brokenness and dysfunction
 - i. God is in the business of restoring families
 - ii. Maybe you have seen God restore your family in this way
- B. We will see God restore the family of Jacob in this chapter
 - i. This work ultimately points to the day when he will restore his family back to him

II. OVERVIEW

- A. After hearing Judah's offer, Joseph sent everyone except his brothers away
 - i. He began weeping and told them he is Joseph
 - ii. His brothers didn't know what to say
- B. Joseph brought his brothers near
 - i. He comforted them
 - ii. He told them God's plan
 - a. God sent Joseph to preserve his family
 - b. There would be five more years of famine
 - iii. He told them to return to Jacob and bring him to Egypt
 - a. There he would provide for them during the famine
- C. Pharaoh was told that Joseph's brothers had arrived
 - i. He commanded them to bring animals back to their father
 - ii. Pack up all their things and return to Egypt with their families
- D. Joseph gave his brothers wagons and provisions for the journey
 - i. He sent donkeys to bring gifts to his father
 - ii. He told his brothers not to argue on the way home
- E. Joseph's brothers returned to Jacob and told him what happened
 - i. Jacob didn't believe at first
 - ii. But his sons insisted
 - iii. So Jacob decided to go down to Egypt to see Joseph

III. THEN JOSEPH – V. 1

- A. After he heard Judah's offer of substitution

IV. COULD NOT CONTROL HIMSELF – V. 1

- A. Because he had seen the repentance in his brothers' actions

V. JOSEPH MADE HIMSELF KNOWN – V. 1

- A. Unclear how he did this
- B. Possibly a defining physical characteristic they would have recognized

VI. IS MY FATHER STILL ALIVE – V. 3

- A. He already knew the answer
 - i. Judah had already answered this question in the previous chapter
- B. Probably more of a statement rather than a question¹

VII. THEY WERE DISMAYED – V. 3

- A. Can also mean *terrified*
- B. Imagine the guilt, confusion, fear they would be feeling

VIII. WHOM YOU SOLD – V. 4

- A. Joseph was honest about what they did
 - i. He didn't ignore or soften it
- B. This proved to his brothers that he actually is Joseph

IX. DISTRESSED OR ANGRY – V. 5

- A. Or, do not grieve
- B. Joseph had compassion for them
- C. This proves Joseph was not after revenge but repentance
 - i. Otherwise he would have wanted them to feel distress

X. GOD'S PURPOSE IN SENDING JOSEPH TO EGYPT – V. 5-7

- A. To preserve life – v. 5
 - i. The human and animal life suffering as a result of the famine
- B. To preserve for Israel a remnant on earth – v. 7
 - i. To ensure they continue to fulfill God's purposes
- C. To keep alive for Israel many survivors – v. 7
 - i. To ensure they remain a nation

XI. A REMNANT – V. 7

- A. Israel would not have been preserved if they had stayed in Canaan
 - i. They would have become just like the Canaanite tribes

¹ Armstrong, S. (2013, May 19). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 45A*. Verse By Verse Ministry International. Retrieved February 24, 2024, from https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_45a

- a. This is shown throughout the story of the Old Testament
- B. God needed to remove them from the land for a while to preserve them
 - i. God did not remove them so they would have enough food to survive the famine
 - ii. God created the famine so they would be removed
- C. This reaches much further than just Joseph's generation
 - i. God has always preserved a remnant in Israel
 - a. Isaiah 10:20-23 ***In that day the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob will no more lean on him who struck them, but will lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return. Destruction is decreed, overflowing with righteousness. For the Lord GOD of hosts will make a full end, as decreed, in the midst of all the earth.***
 - b. This is a theme throughout the Bible

XII. KEEP ALIVE – V. 7

- A. This is the second time the purpose of saving lives has been mentioned
 - i. Preserve life – v. 5
 - ii. The repetition shows the importance of what God was doing in the narrative
- B. This is the culmination of this theme presented throughout the story
 - i. Genesis 42:2 ***And he said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die."***
 - ii. Genesis 42:18 ***On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God..."***
 - iii. Genesis 43:8 ***And Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones."***

XIII. IT WAS NOT YOU WHO SENT ME – V. 8

- A. Not that God literally took over their minds or possessed them
- B. But he uses evil men and evil actions to accomplish his will
 - i. He called Nebuchadnezzar "my servant"
 - a. Jeremiah 27:4-7 ***Give them this charge for their masters: 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: This is what you shall say to your masters: "It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me. Now I***

have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and I have given him also the beasts of the field to serve him. All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson, until the time of his own land comes. Then many nations and great kings shall make him their slave.”

- b. God has every right to do this because he is the one who created everything
- C. There is no difference between man’s actions and God’s sovereignty
 - i. Both can be true at the same time

XIV. HE HAS MADE ME – V. 8

- A. Joseph didn’t do this on his own
- B. He acknowledges God’s sovereign will over his life
 - i. 1 Samuel 2:6-8 ***The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world.***
- C. His brothers thought this was Joseph’s intention when he was younger
 - i. Genesis 37:8 ***His brothers said to him, “Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.***
 - ii. But it was actually God’s intention

XV. GOD HAS MADE ME LORD – V. 9

- A. Jacob would have remembered the dream that Joseph had
 - i. He was the only one who didn’t immediately reject it
 - a. Genesis 37:10-11 ***But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?” And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.***
 - ii. These words from Joseph would invoke that memory and be proof he was alive

XVI. GOSHEN – V. 10

- A. Probably in northeastern Egypt in the Nile Delta²

² Schechter, S. (2021, December 8). Goshen: Where Israel Became A Nation. The Israel Bible. Retrieved February 24, 2024, from <https://theisraelbible.com/the-land-of-goshen-where-israel-became-a-nation/>

- i. Fertile area for grazing
- ii. Where they would remain until the exodus
- B. God provided for Israel during the seven year famine
 - i. Just like he will provide for her during the seven year tribulation
 - a. Revelation 12:6 ***She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.***

XVII. MY MOUTH THAT SPEAKS – V. 12

- A. Joseph was not using an interpreter
 - i. But he was speaking the Hebrew language
 - ii. Further proof that he was their brother

XVIII. BRING MY FATHER DOWN HERE – V. 13

- A. Because it would be easier for Joseph to provide for them when they are close
 - i. Rather than having them return every few months from Canaan for food

XIX. ALL HIS BROTHERS – V. 15

- A. He didn't exclude any of them
 - i. Even the ones that were the most cruel to him³

XX. TALKED WITH HIM – V. 15

- A. They surely wanted to know how he ended up here
- B. This is a significant change from when Joseph was younger
 - i. Genesis 37:4 ***But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.***

XXI. IT PLEASED PHARAOH – V. 16

- A. Egypt had been rescued by Joseph
- B. Pharaoh would have been very happy to bring Joseph's family to Egypt if it meant keeping Joseph there⁴

XXII. FAT OF THE LAND – V. 18

³ Guzik, D. (2018). *Genesis 45 - Joseph Is Reunited With His Brothers*. Enduring Word. <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/genesis-45/>

⁴ Armstrong, S. (2013, May 28). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 45B*. Verse By Verse Ministry International. Retrieved February 24, 2024, from https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_45b

- A. According to Rabbi Daniel Lapin there are two words for fat⁵
- i. The first is *shemen* which is connected with oil
 - a. Oil can be a symbol of financial prosperity or survival
 - i. 1 Kings 17:12-14 ***And she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” And Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go and do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.’”***
 - ii. 2 Kings 4:2-4 ***And Elisha said to her, “What shall I do for you? Tell me; what have you in the house?” And she said, “Your servant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil.” Then he said, “Go outside, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not too few. Then go in and shut the door behind yourself and your sons and pour into all these vessels. And when one is full, set it aside.”***
 - b. Oil is mostly useless on its own
 - i. It requires work to do something with it
 - a. Fire to light it or flour to make bread
 - c. This is the word that Isaac used to refer to the fat of the land
 - i. Genesis 27:28 ***May God give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine.***
 - ii. Genesis 27:39 ***Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: “Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be, and away from the dew of heaven on high.***
 - ii. The other word is *chelev* and is connected to milk
 - a. Milk is a finished product on its own
 - i. It can be used in baking but it can also be drank as is
 - b. This is the word Pharaoh uses in this chapter
 - i. Implies that he will take care of their every need

⁵ Lapin, D. (2018, December 4). *Fat Is fine*. Rabbi Daniel Lapin. Retrieved February 25, 2024, from <https://rabbidaniellapin.com/fat-is-fine/>

- a. Removing their incentive to work
- b. As a result, luring them into a comfortable state of mind
 - 1. Ready to be exploited into slavery

XXIII. TAKE WAGONS – V. 19

- A. To bring your little ones, your wives and your father
 - i. Basically, bring everyone
 - ii. Leave no one behind

XXIV. THE BEST OF ALL THE LAND – V. 20

- A. Just like God gave Adam the good land in the beginning⁶
 - i. Genesis 1:29-31 ***And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.***
 - ii. This is a picture of Eden restoration

XXV. CHANGE OF CLOTHES – V. 22

- A. They had taken Joseph’s coat from him
 - i. But Joseph gives them all a change of clothes
 - ii. Symbolizes a new beginning for the brothers
- B. Jesus was stripped naked but he will give us all new clothes
 - i. Luke 23:34 ***And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments.***
 - ii. Revelation 19:7-8 ***“Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.***

XXVI. BUT TO BENJAMIN – V. 22

- A. Three possible reasons Joseph did this
 - i. He was Joseph’s only full brother

⁶ Sailhamer, J. H. (2008). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis* (T. Longman III & D. E. Garland, Eds.). Zondervan.

- ii. It was a way to prove to Jacob that Joseph was alive
 - a. By showing favor to Jacob's favored son⁷
- iii. It was one final test
 - a. Recreating the conditions of his own attempted murder
 - i. Showing Benjamin great favor
 - ii. And sending him to the wilderness alone with his brothers⁸

XXVII. THE GOOD THINGS OF EGYPT – V. 23

- A. Just like Jacob had sent the good things of Canaan with his sons
 - i. Genesis 43:11 ***Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry a present down to the man, a little balm and a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds.***
- B. We aren't told what these good things are
 - i. But they are on ten donkeys
 - ii. This is an extravagant gift

XXVIII. DO NOT QUARREL – V. 24

- A. Joseph knew their history of violence
 - i. They were repentant but their reputation still followed them
- B. They had repented of what they did to Joseph
 - i. But they were not completely without sin
- C. We must not be upset when our reputation follows us
 - i. Even after we have repented of past sins
 - ii. A good reputation will follow us as well

XXIX. JOSEPH IS STILL ALIVE – V. 26

- A. They likely had to tell their father what they had done at this point
 - i. Jacob probably was not surprised
 - ii. He seems to have already suspected they had done something

⁷ Armstrong, S. (2013, May 28). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 45B*. Verse By Verse Ministry International. Retrieved February 24, 2024, from https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_45b

⁸ Berkenwald, J. (2018, December 16). *Five Sets of Clothes and 300 Shekels of Silver - Vayigash 5779*. Rebyehoshua. Retrieved February 26, 2024, from <https://rebyehoshua.org/2018/12/16/five-sets-of-clothes-and-300-shekels-of-silver-vayigash-5779/>

- a. Genesis 42:36 ***And Jacob their father said to them, “You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has come against me.”***

XXX. THE SPIRIT OF THEIR FATHER – V. 27

- A. Or, *breath*
- B. Jacob was given new breath
 - i. It’s as if he was brought back from the dead at hearing the words of Joseph

XXXI. IT IS ENOUGH – V. 28

- A. Jacob believed Joseph was alive without seeing him
 - i. Because of the testimony of his sons

XXXII. I WILL GO – V. 28

- A. Jacob acted based on his belief
 - i. It would have been ridiculous for him to believe Joseph was alive and not go see him
- B. Faith and belief require action
 - i. James 2:14-19 ***What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!***

XXXIII. POINTS TO JESUS

- A. Israel will one day look upon their Messiah and be dismayed when they realize it is Jesus
 - i. Zechariah 12:10 ***“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.”***
- B. Joseph revealed himself to his brothers the second time he saw them
 - i. Israel did not recognize Jesus the first time they saw him
 - ii. But they will confess him as their Messiah at his second coming
 - a. Zechariah 13:8-9 ***In the whole land, declares the LORD, two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive. And I will put this third into the fire, and***

refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are my people'; and they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

- b. Matthew 23:37-39 *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"*
- C. Jacob did not believe Joseph was alive until he heard Joseph's words and saw his gifts
 - i. People cannot be saved unless they hear Jesus's words
 - a. Romans 10:13-17 *For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*
- D. The theme of preserving life reveals God's plans for Israel and the world through Jesus
 - i. He came to give them and us life
 - a. So we would live and not die
 - ii. Genesis is filled with death
 - a. There's an entire chapter where everyone dies
 - b. A flood kills every human and animal on earth
 - c. But this theme presents a plan to give life to the earth once again
 - i. Culminating in the resurrection
- E. Twice "the best of the land" is mentioned
 - i. Jesus will restore Eden conditions on the earth when he returns
 - a. Isaiah 11:6-10 *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over*

the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

- b. *Ezekiel 36:24-30, 33-36 I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. I will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations... Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. And they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am the LORD; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it."*
- c. *Revelation 22:1-5 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no*

light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

XXXIV. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- A. What are some ways you have seen God work restoration in your life and in your family?

- B. What are some ways that you can be an agent of restoration in your own family or friend group?

- C. Why do you think God chooses to use for good what people meant for evil? Why doesn't he just prevent the evil and the suffering in the first place?

- D. Why do you think Joseph was so comfortable with God using his suffering for the good of others?

- E. What does this chapter reveal about God's purpose for Israel?

F. Do you give much thought to God's plans for Israel? Why or why not?

G. What are some ways that you can give God glory in the authority he has given you?

H. When have you seen God's extravagant generosity in your life?

I. When were some times when you were able to show extravagant generosity to others?
How can you make this a regular part of your lifestyle?

XXXV. FURTHER STUDY

A. How does Proverbs 19:21 express the theme of this chapter? How can we learn to trust God as a result of this?

B. Who is God's remnant now that Jesus has come to fulfill the law? See Romans 11:1-27. What should our attitude be regarding this remnant, according to this passage?

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- C. What will Jesus do to preserve a remnant in Israel when he returns? See Jeremiah 23:1-6; Micah 2:12-13.

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- D. What will life be like for the remnant of Israel after Jesus returns? See Isaiah 4:2-6; Zephaniah 3:8-20; Zechariah 8:1-13.