

## Genesis 45-46

### "Revelation & Reconciliation"

We've been hanging all week onto the cliff of confession & intercession. Judah; who'd come up w/the idea to sell Joseph as a *slave* was now standing before him, begging him for Benjamin's *salvation*.

Joseph, who'd been *despised & rejected* by his brothers, thrown into a pit, pulled up & sold off as a slave into Egypt at the age of 17; God had (over the course of 13 yrs) used a series of seemingly unfortunate events (him being falsely accused, suffering unjustly in prison) to providentially place him in power over all the nation next to Pharaoh himself.

& Now that the rest of his brothers are standing before him (famine having brought them to him) for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, the 1<sup>st</sup> time he told them to bring Benjamin back or he wouldn't believe that they were who they said they were (They didn't recognize him, he spoke to them through an interpreter). & **Jacob, upon hearing that was like, "No way!" ... (How many of you realize that God can use "dry times", difficult days, to get us moving in a direction that otherwise we would have never gone?) The famine pressed on, Jacob had no choice & now here they are.** & Joseph wants to know if they're the same self-centered men who were so willing to destroy *his* life for their own personal gratification, or have they had a change of heart over the last 22 yrs (the last time they seen him).

You see, Judah didn't know he was standing in front of Joseph, but Joseph knew that Judah was standing in front of him... & You recall what happened. After a time of feasting & celebration Joseph had his servant place his personal silver cup in Ben's bag & then overtake them on their way out of Egypt, accusing them of repaying evil for good. (There was still one more test to pass).

Of course when Joseph's servant accused them, they all denied it & said you can kill the man whose bag has the cup in it. He said, "No, if you don't have it you're free to go, but should one of you have it, that man is going to be my slave." Of course there it was in Benjamin's bag...

Worst-case scenario, they all tear their clothes, load up their stuff & head back to Egypt. Judah comes near to Joseph & says, "What can we say? How could we even begin to clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, your slaves, both we & he w/whom the cup was found."

Joseph says, "No, you're free to go, but the boy stays w/me." Judah says, "Listen, you can't do this to me. You don't understand what this will do to my father.

He's already lost one son & if he loses this one he'll die. I told him I would personally be responsible for the boy & if I don't bring him back I couldn't bear the evil that would be brought upon him... please... let me take his place & let the lad go free..."

It was his confession, intercession; his heart (the collective heart of his brothers) had changed. He wasn't looking to serve himself at another's expense, he wasn't about to cast Benjamin away but was willing to lay down his life if it meant salvation for his brother. Godly sorrow had produced repentance & Joseph could hear it in his voice & see it in his life...

### Vs 1-3

This is what we call "shock & awe" right? Judah is there spilling his heart; he's confessing & interceding before him, this genuine compassion overwhelms Joseph & he finally breaks. He starts yelling, "Everybody get out of here!" & He sends all the Egyptians away but He's wailing & sobbing so convulsively that they can hear it throughout the entire house. He's all, "I'm Joseph! Does my father still live?"

They're just standing there in stunned silence, kinda lookin at one another like, "What the...what?" The word "dismayed" means, "amazed" or "terrified", even "vexed", they're standing there in stunned disbelief. They're nervous/anxious, all this emotion & fear is surging through them, they can't even speak.

We've been noting all this guilt that they've been carrying for all these years having mistreated him so horribly & now he's standing there, the most powerful man on the face of the planet. & They're freaking out, thinking perhaps he's gonna kill them when in truth his heart is yearning w/compassion toward them...

Listen, Judah was confessing his sin, speaking of his love for his father, showing loyalty to his brothers & it moved Joseph's heart w/compassion, it resulted in revelation & reconciliation. You want to move the heart of your Lord? Pray, confess your sin, acknowledge your love for your heavenly Father, be loyal to your brothers/sisters. Don't be malicious toward them, stand in the gap on behalf of them & watch what the Lord will do...

Now don't miss the continued picture of Jesus in Joseph's life. We've noted him being despised & rejected, unjustly accused & afflicted, ascending to the right hand of power & being placed in authority over all, in essence becoming the savior of the world (all kinds of parallels, that's just scratching the surface).

What are we seeing here? Even as Joseph wasn't recognized when they saw him the 1<sup>st</sup> time but was unveiled at their 2<sup>nd</sup> encounter, so to w/Christ. The nation of Israel rejected Jesus at His 1<sup>st</sup> coming, (Jn 1:11; He came to His own, & His own did not receive Him). They didn't recognize Him as their Messiah. Yet after His affliction (the cross) He ascended on High to the right hand of God & has become the Savior of the World. & Just like the brothers came to understand who Joseph was when they saw him a 2<sup>nd</sup> time the bible is clear that Israel will recognize & embrace Jesus when they see Him again.

& Just like Joseph's brothers they'll be shocked & stunned, they'll weep & wail for how they treated Him. Zechariah tells us, *"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."*<sup>1</sup>

**Vs 4-8**

All this time he's been speaking to them through an interpreter & now he's speaking in Hebrew. & You can just sense that his brothers are still kind of cringing back in terror & so he says in Vs 4, *"Come near to me."* (Underline those words)

You guys, this is the invitation of your Lord; to draw near to Him that He might reveal Himself to us, calm any fears or reservations that there might be in us. Over & over again throughout God's word He gives us the invitation to "Come" unto Him. Jesus said in Matt 11:28, *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* Again Jn 7:37, *"Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.'"*<sup>2</sup> One more; Rev 22:17, *"And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."*<sup>3</sup> Notice that the invitation to "come" in these Vs is to "all", to "anyone" & to "Whoever". The bible declares that Jesus is the Savior of all men, whosoever will may come, draw near to the Lord J.C. The invitation to "Come near" is there, but it's up to you to respond to that.

Perhaps you're thinking, "I don't know Jeff, you don't know where I've been, the things I've done." You're right; but Jesus does. Joseph was quick to assure them that he knew them & that he loved & had forgiven them.

He said (Vs 4), "Look it's me, you sold me into slavery, it was horrible what you did to me; but don't be grieved or angry w/yourself because ultimately God used it for His glory."

<sup>1</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [Zec 12:10]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>2</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [Jn 7:37]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>3</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [Re 22:17]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

You may've been treating me *cruelly*, but God was using it *providentially*. God is aware of all your faults, all your failings; but He doesn't want you to be *grieved*, He wants you to come to Christ & receive His *forgiveness*.

God knows that in us, that is in our flesh no good thing dwells, we're sinners, created from dust...don't expect that you're going to do some great thing to commend yourself to God...It won't happen. This is the great & unique thing about true Christianity; it's not a matter of us cleaning ourselves up, getting our act together. It's about us being able to receive in humility the fact that it's the blood of Jesus that cleanses us continually; that our sin is washed away perpetually by His work (on our behalf) upon the cross.

Christianity isn't about *condemnation* because of what *we've* done, it's *celebration* because of what *He's* done. You may've done some really bad things, but God has a plan & when you receive God's grace & God's forgiveness, you won't go around boasting in your own righteousness, your own holiness or purity. You'll praise God for His goodness & His mercy...

You see Joseph didn't diminish what his brothers did; but He was able to see the overarching, overruling providence of God in it all. Therefore rather than *crush* his brothers he had *compassion* upon them... It's the principle we've been developing over the last several weeks. That God can bring His good plan even out of the evil intent of man... We see it again & again throughout scripture. I think of Paul the apostle; how much of his life was spent in prison (for no wrong doing of his own); he could've grown bitter toward God. Yet instead he presumed there were prison guards that needed Christ so God brought him to them. He wrote no less than 4 of his epistles from prison & we have them today due to something horribly unfair that befell him. I don't wish prison on him, but I'm sure grateful for God's word that's come to us through his unjust suffering. Man meant it for evil, God used it for good.

Of course the best illustration of this principle is found in the cross itself. Man meant it for evil; but God turned it for good. You might jot down & look up Acts 2 later; there Peter takes an extensive amount of time to speak on this very principle. How that by lawless hands they crucified & put to death Jesus of Nazareth yet God raised Him up because it wasn't possible that death should hold Him; how that even though they *killed* Him, God would grant forgiveness & everlasting *life* through faith in Him. Man's evil intent; God's good plan.

Solomon said it like this, *"There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the Lord's counsel—that will stand."*<sup>4</sup>

### Vs 9-15

Joseph promised to meet their needs, Jesus promises to meet our every need. He says, "There are still tough times ahead, but if you'll leave the place you're at, draw near to me, abide w/me I'll take care of your life." Isn't that what Jesus says to us? He tells us to abide *in* Him, to seek *after* Him & He'll tend to our needs (write it down, look it up, Matt 6:25-33).

What's our part? The only thing that Joseph asks of them is that they report to their father what they've seen in him (Vs 13). We do well to acknowledge to our Father (in heaven) that which we've seen in Christ; His power, His glory, His splendor, His mercy, His provision & grace. Not only should we *thank* God, we should *tell* others, we're to tell others all about what we've come to see in Jesus. His grace *toward* us, the provision He makes *for* us, what His affliction (death & resurrection) has *afforded* us (forgiveness of sin & everlasting life)... We're to be witnesses unto Him of all that He's done; Who He is & that He's ready to receive all who will come to Him.

(Vs 15) "Moreover he kissed all his brothers & wept over them, & after that his brothers talked w/him." How we would love to have that conversation recorded; it was a family affair. Even so when Christ comes again & reveals Himself to the nation of Israel & they see Him for who He is there will be a lot to catch up on... Jesus won't be critical of them, He'll have compassion upon them. Again Zechariah tells us, *"And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms (more literally 'your hands')?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'"*<sup>5</sup> No doubt Jesus will encourage them just as Joseph does his brothers, they may've had ill intent, but God was in control, using it for good; don't be grieved or angry w/yourself & they'll weep together & rejoice in the reconciliation upon His revelation.

### Vs 16-24

More literally, "See that you don't get distracted, or quarrel along the way." You remember when they thought they were in trouble & Reuben was all, "I told you guys not to sin against the boy & now we're gonna pay for it!" Joseph is all, "There's no time *for* or *point in* accusations or recriminations, this is a joyous time for reunion & reconciliation.

<sup>4</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). (Pr 19:21). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.  
<sup>5</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). (Zec 13:6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

So to w/you & me, there's a rough journey ahead but we'll meet w/Jesus soon. See to it that you don't become troubled, don't get distracted along the way.

You recall that Jacob sent Joseph a tray of pistachios & honey; Joseph sends back a fleet of u-hauls for the return trip & 20 donkeys loaded w/provisions & the good things of Egypt.

Also let's note that the brothers weren't bothered at all by the abundance w/which Benjamin was blessed. They were so blown away by Joseph's forgiveness & compassion toward them that they just didn't have room for envy or jealousy of another... This is how it'll be when Jesus is revealed, when we're living w/Him; no more competitive spirit, no more jealousy or envy. We won't notice if someone has 5x's more than us; we'll just be totally stoked for everyone else. Our society is very competition based, high premiums are placed on "getting ahead" (whatever that means). It won't be the way when we're w/Jesus. We'll just be blessed & blown away w/His love & forgiveness.

### Vs 25-28

Couple things. The boys come home & they're all, "Joseph is alive! He's the lord of all Egypt!" Jacob is all, "What are you guys tryin to pull now..." He thought it was some measure of cruelty; his heart nearly failed him, he just couldn't believe them...

But when he *heard Joseph's words & saw the carts* his spirit revived, he believed. They heard the word & saw it backed up by the reality of His goodness toward them. Even so how is it that people will come to believe that Jesus is alive? When they hear His word & see His goodness & mercy on display in our lives. The bible says, "*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*"<sup>6</sup> He heard his words, saw testimony of his goodness & it sparked faith in his heart.

### Ch 46

#### Vs 1-4

Israel, upon hearing the news couldn't get his bags packed fast enough! But as he approached the southern most border of Canaan & prepared to pass over into Egypt he began to have 2<sup>nd</sup> thoughts. So he stopped to seek the Lord.

Now you may recall that Abraham lived in Beersheba for awhile as did his father Isaac. Actually Isaac built an altar there & I would suspect that it was upon *that* altar that Jacob offered *these* sacrifices.

<sup>6</sup> The New King James Version. (1982). [Ro 10:17]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

The question comes up; why the hesitation, why the reservation? Well, you might remember that his family has a history of heading for Egypt during times of famine & it's (thus far) caused nothing but grief & regret. Abraham acquired Hagar there, Isaac was told he bettered not go there & now Jacob is considering transitioning somewhere that previously God had stated clearly that his dad/granddad was to stay away from.

Not to mention that God had told Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a land not their own & they would serve them & afflict them 400 yrs... & Now Jacob is leading his family into this foreign land & all these things are running through his mind. So understandably/wisely he takes the time to see the Lord (sacrificially).

Listen, when we're confused on an issue, uncertain of our direction, it's wise to seek the Lord; to be certain before we make the move. As for the sacrifice I'd refer you to Rom 12:1-2; he's not looking for an animal, God wants you. To live your life set apart to *Him* & as you do He'll prove out His will in *you*... God speaks to Jacob once again, calms his heart, gives him assurance that he's doing the right thing.

He says, "Don't fear to go down to Egypt; for I will make of you a great nation there." Egypt would be the "womb" in which the nation of Israel would fully develop & come out of as a full-blown nation.

God promises to bring Jacob back into the land (prophetically this happens in the Exodus when as a nation they return, personally Jacob will be buried in Canaan after his death). Egypt (God assures him) won't be their permanent abode.

When He says that Joseph will put his hands on his eyes He's saying that Joseph would care for him until his dying day. Joseph would be the one to close his eyes on his death bed.

### Vs 5-7

He's walking by faith, he didn't leave anyone or anything behind, he trusted God fully & brought his entire family.

Now over the next 20 Vs we see the lineage of Jacob's family up to this point. In Vs 12 you'll see Judah's son Perez from whom Jesus will be brought through (Luke 3:33).

In Vs 26 you discover there were 66 in total, when you add Jacob, Joseph & his 2 sons already in Egypt (Vs 27 tells us), the total was 70... In 400 yrs they'll be lingering around 2 million.

### Vs 28-30

Judah (again ascending to leadership w/in his family) goes before them, makes arrangements for their coming. Once they arrive in Goshen Joseph goes to see his father; it's been 29-30 yrs & it's more than he could've ever asked or even thought.

It wasn't any quick handshake & "How you been?" kind of meeting, it was emotionally charged & lasted a good while. We can only imagine the reunion of the Father w/His Son J.C. when after having suffered He ascended on high; what an incredible reunion it must've been.

### Vs 31-34

Following the reunion w/his father, he becomes a mediator for his family. Just as Jesus, after He died for our sins, ascended to heaven & sat at the right hand of the Father has become our mediator whereby He intercedes on our behalf.

Joseph says, "Hey, we'll let them know you're shepherds, they won't touch you, it will hedge you as God forms you into a nation." They could be *in* the world (so to speak), but they wouldn't be *of* the world, they'd be separate.

By saying they were shepherds people would look at them like they were marked men, wouldn't want to have anything to do w/them, but ultimately that would serve to protect them from pagan influence. Listen to me, your open conversation about who you are, the bible in your hand, the Christian logo on your shirt will mark you out to the world. People won't want anything to do w/you if you identify yourself w/the "Good Shepherd". It's closet Christians who so easily get into trouble. Don't say, "I got a meeting." Say, "I'm going to a bible study, how about you join me?" Identify yourself at every opportunity you get. People might stay away from you, but God will use that to keep you from the influence of the world. Joseph said, "They need to know who you are, it'll maintain your purity & you'll preserve your identity." Come out from among them & be separate, says the Lord. God wants you to grow into the fullness of all He's called you to be. Trust *in* Him, stay set apart *to* Him & He'll be glorified in your life. Amen? Amen.

### Prayer Points:

God we thank You for the richness of Your word, the goodness of Jesus & Your simple instruction/encouragement for our lives. Help us not to be side tracked when secondary causes are used to bring about Your primary purpose. May we see Your sovereignty & trust You completely. Be glorified in our lives.

Listen, the invitation goes out. Jesus says, "Come near to Me." He wants you to understand His love for you, His compassion toward you, His forgiveness for you. But you have to come, He suffered upon the cross, was afflicted for us, the chastisement for our peace was laid upon Him & it's by His stripes we are healed. Believe on the Lord J.C. & you'll be saved.