

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Bible Study Notes

4-8-20

Genesis 45

Joseph Makes Himself Known - Verses 1-15

¹Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence. ⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!" ⁵ And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. ⁶ For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. ⁷ But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. ⁸ "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. ⁹ Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay. ¹⁰ You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.' ¹² "You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. ¹³ Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly." ¹⁴ Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him.

45:4-8 Although Joseph's brothers had wanted to get rid of him, God used even their evil actions to fulfill his ultimate plan. He had sent Joseph ahead to preserve their lives, save Egypt, and prepare the way for the beginning of the nation of Israel. God is sovereign. His plans are not dictated by human actions. When others intend evil toward you, remember that they are only God's tools. As Joseph said to his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good. He brought me to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (50:20).

Pharaoh Invites Jacob's [Israel's] Family to Live in Egypt - Verses 16-28

¹⁶ When the news reached Pharaoh's palace that Joseph's brothers had come, Pharaoh and all his officials were pleased. ¹⁷ Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and return to the land of Canaan, ¹⁸ and bring your father and your families back to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can enjoy the fat of the land.' ¹⁹ "You are also directed to tell them, 'Do this: Take some carts from Egypt for your children and your wives, and get your father and come. ²⁰ Never mind about your belongings, because the best of all Egypt will be yours.'"

²¹ So the sons of Israel did this. Joseph gave them carts, as Pharaoh had commanded, and he also gave them provisions for their journey. ²² To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes. ²³ And this is what he sent to his father: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey. ²⁴ Then he sent his brothers away, and as they were leaving he said to them, "Don't quarrel on the way!" ²⁵ So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. ²⁶ They told him, "Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of all Egypt." Jacob was stunned; he did not believe them. ²⁷ But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph had sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. ²⁸ And Israel said, "I'm convinced! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

45:17-20 Joseph had been rejected, kidnapped, enslaved, and imprisoned. Although his brothers had been unfaithful to him, he graciously forgave them and shared his prosperity. Joseph demonstrated how God forgives us and showers us with goodness even though we have sinned against him. The same forgiveness and blessings are ours if we ask for them.

45:26-27 Jacob needed some evidence before he could believe the incredible news that Joseph was alive. Similarly, Thomas refused to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead until he could see and touch him (John 20:25). It is hard to change what you believe without all the facts—or sometimes even with the facts. Good news can be difficult to believe. Don't ever give up hope that God has a wonderful future in store for you.

Genesis 46

Jacob Goes to Egypt - Verses 1-27

¹ So Israel set out with all that was his, and when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. ² And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, "Jacob! Jacob!" "Here I am," he replied. ³ "I am God, the God of your father," he said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. ⁴ I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes." ⁵ Then Jacob left Beersheba, and Israel's sons took their father Jacob and their children and their wives in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to transport him. ⁶ So Jacob and all his offspring went to Egypt, taking with them their livestock and the possessions they had acquired in Canaan. ⁷ Jacob brought with him to Egypt his sons and grandsons and his daughters and granddaughters—all his offspring. ⁸ These are the names of the sons of Israel (Jacob and his descendants) who went to Egypt: Reuben the firstborn of Jacob. ⁹ The sons of Reuben: Hanok, Pallu, Hezron and Karmi. ¹⁰ The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, 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 had died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. ¹³ The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub and Shimron. ¹⁴ The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon and Jahleel. ¹⁵ These were the sons Leah bore to Jacob in Paddan Aram, besides his daughter Dinah. These sons and daughters of his were thirty-three in all. ¹⁶ The sons of Gad: Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli. ¹⁷ The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi and Beriah. Their sister was Serah. The sons of Beriah:

Heber and Malkiel. ¹⁸ These were the children born to Jacob by Zilpah, whom Laban had given to his daughter Leah—sixteen in all. ¹⁹ The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰ In Egypt, Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. ²¹ The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard. ²² These were the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob—fourteen in all. ²³ The son of Dan: Hushim. ²⁴ The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer and Shillem. ²⁵ These were the sons born to Jacob by Bilhah, whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel—seven in all. ²⁶ All those who went to Egypt with Jacob—those who were his direct descendants, not counting his sons' wives—numbered sixty-six persons. ²⁷ With the two sons who had been born to Joseph in Egypt, the members of Jacob's family, which went to Egypt, were seventy in all.

46:3-4 The Israelites did become a great nation, and Jacob's descendants eventually returned to Canaan. The book of Exodus recounts the story of Israel's slavery in Egypt for 400 years (fulfilling God's words to Abram in 15:13-16), and the book of Joshua gives an exciting account of the Israelites entering and conquering Canaan, the Promised Land.

46:3-4 God told Jacob to leave his home and travel to a strange and faraway land. But God reassured him by promising to go with him and take care of him. When new situations or surroundings frighten you, recognize that experiencing fear is normal. To be paralyzed by fear, however, is an indication that you question God's ability to take care of you.

46:4 Jacob never returned to Canaan. This was a promise to his descendants that they would return. "Joseph's own hand will close your eyes" refers to Joseph being at Jacob's side and attending to him at his death. It was God's promise to Jacob that he would never know the pain of being lonely again.

Jacob and His Family in Egypt - Verses 28-34

²⁸ Now Jacob sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to get directions to Goshen. When they arrived in the region of Goshen, ²⁹ Joseph had his chariot made ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as Joseph appeared before him, he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time. ³⁰ Israel said to Joseph, "Now I am ready to die, since I have seen for myself that you are still alive." ³¹ Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and speak to Pharaoh and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who were living in the land of Canaan, have come to me. ³² The men are shepherds; they tend livestock, and they have brought along their flocks and herds and everything they own.' ³³ When Pharaoh calls you in and asks, 'What is your occupation?' ³⁴ you should answer, 'Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did.' Then you will be allowed to settle in the region of Goshen, for all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians."

46:31-34 Jacob moved his whole family to Egypt, but they wanted to live apart from the Egyptians. To ensure this, Joseph told them to let Pharaoh know they were shepherds. Although Pharaoh may have been sympathetic to shepherds (for he was probably descended from the nomadic Hyksos line), the Egyptian culture would not willingly accept shepherds among them. The strategy worked, and Jacob's family was able to benefit from Pharaoh's generosity as well as from the Egyptians' prejudice.