

**GENESIS**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Genesis chapter 44 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw the 10 sons of Jacob, including Benjamin, return to Egypt to buy more grain during this famine. Keep in mind that Simeon was placed in prison by Joseph until they returned with Benjamin like they were told to do and he may have been locked up for several months!

We closed last time with Joseph having a meal prepared for them, and he seated them according to their birth order, from oldest to youngest and this troubled them. This was not a chance happening. In fact, the odds of anyone doing this with 11 brothers were 1 in 40 million! Thus, they just couldn't understand how this man could do that, not knowing it was Joseph, their brother. He also gave Benjamin five times more food than the other brothers, putting him in a place of honor. Joseph wanted to see how they would respond, if they would envy Benjamin or treat him differently as they did to Joseph many years earlier. But as we read, they continued to eat and talk, no animosity at all and that is where we will pick up our study this evening, in Genesis chapter 44, starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

**GENESIS 44****VERSES 1-5**

1. For the brother's of Joseph, things seemed to go well and I bet they left feeling good. They not only received Simeon back but they are also leaving with Benjamin, which should bring joy to their father's heart, seeing that nothing bad happened to him.

But Joseph has a plan that some might see this as a type of revenge towards his brother's for what they had done to him, but I don't see it that way. It is not the character of Joseph, not at all. Joseph has his steward place his silver cup in the bag of Benjamin along with the money Benjamin brought to buy the grain, and they did not know this. Now, as bad as that does sound, Joseph is going to use this to break his brother's of their sin so that they can repent and get restored. Brokenness is not bad because it will cause us to draw close to God, at least it should!

2. Now, what about this silver cup of Joseph's that we are told he used for divination, isn't that wrong? Of course it is and in Deuteronomy 18:10-13, which was after this but I am sure the Lord spoke to Joseph about this, we are told, **“There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God.”**

I believe that Joseph did not use this cup for divination, he drank from it, but his brothers didn't know that and thus, he is playing along with the practices of that culture so they would not get suspicious of him. I believe that is all that is going on here.

#### VERSES 6-10

1. Look how confident they are. There is no way any of them would do such a thing. They saw how the man treated them, thinking they were spies, placing them in prison for 3 days and-so-on. Because of this confidence they had they told the steward that whoever's sack the silver cup is found in, let that person be put to death! They had no idea that it would be found in Benjamin's. But the steward repeats what Joseph had told him to say, that the person where the silver cup is found will become the salve of this man, Joseph. Everyone else will be set free, but not the one that has the cup.

#### VERSES 11-13

1. Can you imagine how they felt upon seeing the silver cup in Benjamin's sack! Their father's favorite son and now he will become a slave to this man in Egypt, never seeing his father or family again! He will never be allowed to go home again. But, notice what they do. Instead of returning home, like they did when they sold Joseph into slavery, they go back to Egypt to see the man, to see Joseph. They were willing to stand with Benjamin and possibly sacrificing their own freedom or life. This was a far different attitude from years earlier.

VERSES 14-17

1. They now acknowledge their sin before God. Yes, they tried to cover it for these past 22 years or so, but God has brought it to light and they are broken and willing to sacrifice their own lives for their brother Benjamin. In regards to this, George Williams writes:

He acted so as to bring their sin to remembrance, to make them confess it with their own lips . . . His detention of Simeon, and afterwards of Benjamin, was skillfully designed so as to find out if they were still indifferent to the cries of a captive brother and the tears of a bereaved father. His plan succeeded admirably; his sternness and his kindness both conspired to disquiet them; and his goodness helped to lead them to repentance.

- George Williams

2. Can you imagine how they are feeling and then Joseph tells them that they are free to go, only Benjamin will stay and he will become his slave. What are they going to do? Let's read on because you will see how they truly have changed over the years as God is working in them so He then can work through them.

VERSES 18-32

1. In regards to these words of Judah, F.B. Meyer wrote: "In all literature, there is nothing more pathetic than this appeal." H.C. Leupold wrote, "This is one of the manliest, most straightforward speeches ever delivered by any man. For depth of feeling and sincerity of purpose it stands unexcelled." Barnhouse called it "the most moving address in all the Word of God."

You see, a broken man who is no longer concerned about his welfare but he is concerned not only for his brother Benjamin but also for his father Jacob has changed. We saw how that 22 years earlier he allowed his father to believe that Joseph was dead, eaten by wild animals. Now he can only say that is what Jacob believed, it is not what really happened. Judah is broken and I believe so too were his brothers. They knew what they did and now conviction has led to confession of their sin and ultimately restoration.

#### VERSES 33-34

1. Judah was willing to lay down his life for his brother and his father. Interestingly enough, from the tribe of Judah will come the Messiah, Jesus who did lay down His life for us by paying in full the penalty for our sins and He has given to us everlasting life with Him. It is as Jesus said in John 15:13, **“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.”** That is what Judah was willing to do here.
  
2. Look at how the hearts of Joseph’s brothers have changed and like I have said, Joseph’s actions were to bring about brokenness over their sin, which would lead them to repent and be restored. Here are those changes that we have seen:
  - They did not resent it when Benjamin was given the favored portion (Genesis 43:34)
  - They trusted each other, not accusing each other of wrong when accused of stealing the cup (Genesis 44:9)
  - They stuck together when the silver cup was found. They did not abandon the favored son and allow him to be carried back to Egypt alone (Genesis 44:13)
  - They completely humbled themselves for the sake of the favored son (Genesis 44:14)

- They knew their predicament was the result of their sin against Joseph (Genesis 44:16)
- They offered themselves as slaves to Egypt, not abandoning Benjamin, the favored son, their brother (Genesis 44:16)
- They showed due concern for how this might affect their father (Genesis 44:29-31)
- Judah was willing to be a substitutionary sacrifice for his brother out of love for his father and his brethren (Genesis 44:33)

## GENESIS 45

### VERSES 1-3

1. If Joseph was out for revenge he would not have responded like this. He wept, he wailed, he was so overwhelmed by not only seeing his brothers but also by seeing how they have changed. And thus, he reveals himself to them. Their response, “. . . **But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.**” Genesis 45:3. That word “**dismayed**” in Hebrew is BAHAL, (baw-hal’) and it carries with it the idea of being amazed, or frightened, even to the point of being terrified! But why were they afraid? Can you image? They knew what they did to Joseph, how he pleaded with them to let him out of the pit but his cries fell on deaf ears and they sold him into slavery! Now Joseph is in a position to do whatever he wanted to them!

VERSES 4-8

1. Can you imagine how terrified they were, so much so they backed away from Joseph and thus, Joseph tells them, “**Please come near to me**” and they do. They were comfortable now; maybe they saw the love and forgiveness in Joseph. But, whatever the case, they came close.
2. Joseph was rejected by his brother’ the first time, when he had his dreams and in a sense, was put to death by them. Now, the second time they recognize him for who he is, their deliverer! Folks, Joseph is a type of Christ and the Jews rejected Jesus in His first coming and, in a sense, they put Him to death. But, when He comes the second time they will recognize Him as their Messiah!

In Acts 7:9-13 Stephen tells us this, “**And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh.**”

It is as we are told in Zechariah 12:10, **“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.”** It is during the Tribulation Period that the Jews, as a nation will turn to Jesus as their Lord and Savior, as their Messiah! Yes, Jewish people are receiving Jesus today but the nation has not turned, but they will for Jesus said, **“for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”** Matthew 23:39. So just like with the children of Israel not recognizing Joseph until the second time, so too do we see it with the nation of Israel not recognizing Jesus until His second coming!

3. Let me ask you this, why was Joseph in Egypt? Was it because of the sin of his brothers or the plan of God? The answer to that question is both. God used their sin to fulfill His plan. It did not negate the sin of his brothers but Joseph also saw the hand of God in this. That God was going to save His people and to do that Joseph needed to be down in Egypt!



4. Where are you at this evening? Do you feel that life is not fair? Do you feel that things are not working out like you thought they should? Do you feel that you are a victim?

You see, if you do then you have taken God out of the picture. That is not to negate what you are going through, but understand that God is in control and He is aware! Rabbi Harold Kushner wrote a remarkably wide-selling book titled *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. It sold more than a half a million copies before going to paperback and was on the *New York Times* best-seller list for a whole year. The whole point of his book is to say God is all loving but not all powerful, that God is good, but not sovereign. So, when bad things happen to good people, it is because events are out of God's control. Kushner advises his readers to "learn to love [God] and forgive him despite his limitations." This certainly is not the God of the Bible! Joseph understood that God is in control and thus, we must learn to trust in Him for He will work out all things for good in our lives!

#### VERSES 9-15

1. Why was Joseph in such a hurry to bring his father down to Egypt? Keep in mind that Jacob is old and it is possible that Joseph wanted to see him before he died. I believe that is the reason.

2. Do you see the love, the forgiveness Joseph has towards his brother's, and not just Benjamin who was not involved in the plan of selling Joseph into slavery. It doesn't matter how cruel they were to him, he reached out in love and they responded back.

What an example for us to learn. To forget and forgive and that is then manifested in our actions, that AGAPE love we show, as Joseph did!

VERSES 16-24

1. When Pharaoh heard that the brother's of Joseph are in town, he blesses them. He tells them to return with their father back to the land but not to bring their things back with them, for he will provide for them. Thus, they are sent away with carts and animals, all kinds of things so that they can bring their families back to Egypt with them. Can you imagine what Jacob thought when he saw them coming with all these things, when they were to only bring back grain! "Oh no! What have you done? What kind of trouble did you get into now?" he was probably thinking.

2. As they begin to leave for the land of Canaan, Joseph tells them, ". . . **'See that you do not become troubled along the way.'**" Genesis 45:24. What is that all about? It means that they should not get into a fight, they shouldn't quarrel over this. They shouldn't blame each other or point the finger, because this was the plan of God. Yes, they sinned but God used their sin to save a people. It is as Joseph will say in Genesis 50:19-21, ". . . **'Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.'** And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them."

Yes, they sinned as I have said, but that is forgiven and they need to move on. How about you? If you have repented, you need to move on because God has forgiven you! Don't hold onto past failures, past sins, give them to the Lord and move on. You are a new creation in Christ, that old life has passed away and you are new in Him! Paul put it like this in Philippians 3:12-14, "**Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**" May we do the same, ***PRESS ON!***

#### VERSES 25-28

1. Can you imagine what was going through Jacob's mind when his son's told him that Joseph was alive? First joy and then maybe, "I'm going to kill you kids! Did you do this to Joseph?" Jacob could have said that, but not Israel, not the one who was governed by God! You see, when he heard the words and saw the blessings, he believed! Folks, we must do the same. Tell people that Jesus is alive, that He is risen, share the Word of God with them and let them see how God is working in our lives, the blessings, that they too may believe!

2. Notice, who said, “. . . **‘It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.’**” Genesis 45:28. It was Israel who said this! Jacob said, “**All things are against me.**” But not Israel, he was governed by God and walked by faith! Again, your perspective in life will be based on you being Jacob the schemer or Israel, governed by God!

## **GENESIS 46**

### **VERSES 1-4**

1. So as Jacob and his family begin their journey to Egypt, Jacob seeks the Lord, he offers a sacrifice to the Lord and the Lord tells him not to be afraid. Why was Jacob fearful? First of all, Beersheba was on the edge of the Promise Land and now there is only desert before them. Jacob is old, they have to carry him and his eyesight is poor, so he could have been fearful because of this tough journey. But I believe it was more than that. I believe it is because of what the Lord told his father Isaac back in Genesis 26:2, “**Then the Lord appeared to him and said: ‘Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you.’**” Now the Lord is telling Jacob, He is encouraging him to go down to Egypt and it is there that God will bring forth a great nation, the nation of Israel! Yes, they will go down to Egypt but God will bring them up again into the land of Canaan. For as the Lord told Abraham in Genesis chapter 15, they will be down there and face affliction for 400 years and their total time down in Egypt will be 430 years. You see, 30 of those years they will not face affliction but enjoy a time of peace living in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 12:40-41, Galatians’ 3:17).

In Exodus 1:8-14 we see this played out as we are told, **“Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, ‘Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land.’ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage — in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor.”** Thus,

there is no discrepancy, in fact, the Scriptures are very accurate, they are very detailed with the time frame of how long they were down in Egypt and how long of a period of time they were oppressed down there! They will enter the land with 70 people and leave Egypt with over 2 million! A nation will be born!

2. That phrase, **“ . . . Joseph will put his hand on your eyes”** is an expression that speaks of Joseph and Jacob seeing each other and that when Jacob dies, Joseph will be there and he will die in peace, something he was not enjoying before he saw Joseph!

#### VERSES 5-7

1. They are on their way to Egypt and now we will see the children and grandchildren of Israel that are traveling to Egypt.

VERSES 8-15

1. These are the descendents of Jacob through Leah, 33 children in all. Some feel the Job in verse 13 is the one who is spoken of in the book of Job. It could be, the time frame is correct.

VERSES 16-18

1. These are the descendents of Jacob through Zilpah, 16 in all.

VERSES 19-22

1. These are the descendants of Jacob through Rachel, the wife he loved, 14 in all.

VERSES 23-25

1. These are the descendants of Jacob through Bilhah, 7 in all.

VERSES 26-27

1. Why does Genesis 46:26-27, Exodus 1:5 and Deuteronomy 10:22 all say 70 people and Stephen say 75 people in Acts 7:14? Because the Septuagint text, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, says that Genesis 46:27 is 75 people and thus, Stephen, being a Hellenist Jew would read the Septuagint text. Why the difference then between the Hebrew and the Greek? It seems like the 75 included Joseph's descendants born in Egypt.

Gleason Archer put it this way regarding this issue:

We therefore conclude that both totals [from the Hebrew Masoretic text and the Septuagint] are correct, though they were calculated differently. Jacob's own sons numbered twelve; his grandsons by them numbered fifty-two; there were already four great-grandsons born in Canaan by the time of the migration, for a total of sixty-six. Manasseh and Ephraim, born in Egypt, increased the total to sixty-eight; Jacob and his wife (whichever she was) brought it up to seventy. But the Septuagint added the seven grandsons of the prime minister [Joseph] and omitted Jacob and his wife from the tally.

This brings us to the result that Stephen correctly reported the number seventy-five, according to the Septuagint in Gen 46:27 and Ex 1:5. Likewise, Gen 46:27; Ex 1:5, and Deut 10:22 in the Masoretic text are correct with their total of seventy. Either figure is correct, depending on whether Joseph's grandchildren are included. (Four great-grandchildren of Jacob were included even in the Masoretic text tally of seventy.)

- Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, p 379

VERSES 28-30

1. Goshen was a very fertile section in Egypt near the delta of the Nile River. Now, why does Judah lead the way to the land of Goshen? The word “Goshen” means, “to draw near” and Judah means, “praise.” It is as Psalm 100 tells us, **“Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations.”** Psalm 100:1-5. We are to enter into His presence, come before the Lord with praise and that is what Judah was doing as he lead the descendants of Israel to draw near to God through praise!

2. Back in Genesis 42:36 Jacob said, “. . . **‘You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me.’**” Now he sees things differently. We tend to do that. In the midst of a trial – all things are against us! But then, as we go through that trial, as we are on the other side, we see that all things were not against us but God was working for us, for our good. May we learn to rest in Him in the midst of our trials, that is what God desires!



VERSES 31-34

1. The Egyptian society was based on a caste system, much like we see in India today. Thus, shepherds were on the bottom of the ladder, you might say that they were the untouchables of India today! In fact, Joseph tells us that to the Egyptians, shepherds were an abomination, they were disgusting, looked down upon and thus, they stayed clear of them!

2. Now why would God do this? Why would Joseph make the point of telling his family to say to Pharaoh that they are shepherds? Because God wanted them to be separated from the Egyptians. He did not want them to be assimilated into the Egyptian culture. You see, in 430 years a nation would be born!

3. Folks, as I close this evening let me leave you with this to think about. Paul tells us in II Corinthians 6:14-18, **“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.’”**

In other words, the world will avoid us. We are detestable to them. Thus, don't become like them or be assimilated into their lifestyle, but as Paul said, "**I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**" Romans 12:1-

2. May we be wise because who knows the things that God will birth from our lives as we walk with Him!