

## GENESIS 42-47

Intro:

In looking at the continuing story of Joseph and his journey from the pit to the palace, I believe we also see a picture of salvation, of redemption and of forgiveness.

Jacob and his sons and their families will be saved from this great famine because of God's redemptive plan, because of God's ultimate purpose for the life of Joseph, His purpose for the nation Israel and His plan for the salvation of the world through the saving Grace of Jesus Christ.

--Just a quick review--

So, Joseph, one of Jacob's two sons by Rachel, has a dream which shows him he will be elevated to a position of authority over his older brothers.

Stop me if you've heard this before. This doesn't sit well with his brothers. There is anger and jealousy. They plot to kill him (Cain & Able anyone). Ultimately, they throw him into a pit and sell him into slavery.

Now, knowing the story and the outcome, we know that this was the plan of God all along. Looking back on it from an historical perspective we can say; 'sure I see God's plan and purpose. How wonderful and marvelous.'

But not so for Joseph. He didn't know what the Lord had planned for him, but the Bible says; '***The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered.***' (**Gen. 39:2**) And in verse 3 it says his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success.

And when tempted by Potiphar's wife Joseph resisted the temptation saying that it would be a sin against God.

And while in prison, Joseph is shown kindness by God and is granted favor by the Warden.

So clearly Joseph was a man of God, a man of faith, a man with God's hand upon his life. People around him saw this, and of course God knew this and used Joseph in a mighty way.

So most of us know the story; Joseph is eventually elevated to great authority and power in Egypt. He is second in charge, only Pharaoh himself is above Joseph. He spends the next seven years helping Egypt prepare for the coming famine.

We heard Pastor Silas in last week's teaching talk about "No Pain, No Gain" – and we see this illustrated here in the story of Joseph.

He suffered the pain of the loss of his family, the pain of his brother's hatred and jealousy, the pain of being thrown into a pit, sold into slavery, thrown into prison for something he didn't do.

And then the "gain" of being elevated to the #2 person in all of Egypt, in charge of everything and everyone. And of course the "gain" of being put in a position of being able to save his family from famine and restore the broken relationships.

This story is one of the best examples in all of Scripture of Genesis 50:20, where Joseph is about to die and reassures his cowardly brothers not to be afraid when he says; ***"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."***

What was also being done was the preservation of the Nation Israel and the line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that would lead directly to The Messiah.

So here we are at chapter 42 – Joseph is “Da Man” in Egypt. He’s wheeling and dealing with his store houses full of grain. The famine is in full swing and the story shifts back to Jacob.

***(Read 42:1-24).***

Jacob hears that there is grain in Egypt, so he calls his sons in and he says; ‘Hey, why are you guys just standing around looking at each other? Are you clueless or what? We’re dying here, how about you guys go down and get us some food?’ (Stooges example)

Obviously there was no shortage of money for them to buy food with, but there did seem to be a shortage of leadership and initiative.

Without the hand of God and His purpose and plan these people would have probably starved to death. This is a small example or picture I believe of the nation Israel and how God’s providential hand has preserved them throughout all of history.

This is the line through which Jesus, The Messiah will come. Obviously God’s plan and purpose was going to be fulfilled, in spite of sinful man’s best efforts to mess it up.

I think it’s important to look at, examine and study the OT to see how those Scriptures point to God’s redemption of man through faith in Jesus.

There is a straight line from God through the OT to Jesus Christ and the NT. In Luke 24, on the road to Emmaus, Jesus said to the two men;

***‘How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter His Glory?’ “And beginning with***

***Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures (OT) concerning himself.***

And in John 5:39 & 40, talking to His accusers Jesus says; ***“You diligently search the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”***

And verse 46 says; ***“If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.”***

We are certainly justified, and I believe called to search all of Scripture for Jesus!

So off the ‘boys’ go to Egypt with plenty of money to buy food. Benjamin is kept behind by Jacob because; ***“...he was afraid that harm might come to him.”*** He’s apparently not concerned about harm coming to the other 10 brothers.

When they arrive in Egypt they are brought before Joseph, their brother but they don’t recognize him. He, however, recognizes them immediately. He speaks harshly to them, accusing and questioning them.

He throws them into prison for three days and then decides to offer them a deal. He will let all but one go back with enough food to feed their households but, they will have to return with their youngest brother.

Joseph tells them this to give them a chance to prove that they are honest men, but of course Joseph already knows that they are not honest men.

He is orchestrating the situation because he has a great desire to see his younger brother Benjamin. I believe he also has a great love and compassion for his brothers in spite of what they did to

him. He wants to forgive them and have a restored relationship with them.

**SOUND FAMILIAR? JUST LIKE OUR LORD!**

We see here in the story of Joseph and his brothers a type or picture of Christ and His redemption of mankind. We see separation, tribulation, trial, imprisonment and desperation.

We then see restoration, redemption, reconciliation and forgiveness. All pictures of God's ultimate redemptive plan through Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross.

Isn't this how it always goes. Every believer has a salvation story, and though they take different forms they all have to begin with a recognition of wrong doing on our part. An admission that we have sinned, that we have wronged a Holy and Righteous God.

The same is true for human relationships. When we do or say something wrong to someone, in order for that relationship to be made whole the person committing the wrong must confess it and ask for forgiveness. And a Believer who is wronged must be willing and ready to forgive because he/she was first forgiven.

AMEN?

And isn't that exactly what we see here in this story. Joseph's brothers wronged him and now all these years later, as he begins to treat them harshly there is a recognition on their part (V.21) that maybe they were being treated this way because of what they had done to their brother.

Even with the passing of time the memory has not faded for them. It still eats at them and condemns them. That's what unconfessed sin does to us. It's like a cancer.

So Joseph hears his brothers say this, and verse 24 tells us he wept. Scripture doesn't tell us why he wept but I think if we look at

the overall story it tells us there was great emotion involved and that Joseph had a great desire for reconciliation. He could hear for the first time an admission by his brothers, and had great hope that eventually they would all be restored.

AGAIN, SOUND FAMILIAR?

### Chapter 43

The boys go back to Jacob with the food and tell him everything that had happened. Now some time later they find themselves again at the end of their food supply. Jacob tells them they have to go back and buy some more.

They remind him of what the Egyptian leader (Joseph) had said before they left the last time. They needed to bring Benjamin back with them in order to prove they are honest men, and to be able get Simeon out of prison.

Jacob tries to talk his way around it but eventually realizes he must agree or they will all starve.

So off the boys go, back to Egypt with silver and gifts and their brother Benjamin, to buy more food and to get Simeon out prison.

As Joseph meets his brothers for the second time we again see a lot of emotion on his part. Seeing his younger brother Benjamin for the first time in many years he has to leave the room and find a private place to weep.

I believe some of what is going on here is Joseph's realization that he is in a position to be able to restore his family and their relationships. He had a great desire to see his brother Benjamin and his father and he is in a position to be able to make that happen.

Joseph knew God's hand was upon his life and that it was God who put him into that position and he acknowledges that in chapter 45 & 50, that it was God who did all this.

## Chapter 44

Just like we see the hand of God orchestrating the events of Joseph's life in order that the ancestral line to the Messiah is preserved, we see Joseph orchestrating events in order that he is able to see his brother Benjamin and his father Jacob.

And even more importantly, in order that restoration, repentance, redemption and forgiveness can take place.

In this chapter I think we see this best illustrated in his brother Judah.

At the beginning of this chapter Joseph once again sets them up for failure by placing his own silver cup in Benjamin's bag and then has his steward find it and bring them all back to the palace to be confronted.

### **Let's read verses 16 & 17 and then verses 30-34**

Let's remember that Judah is the one through whom the line of The Messiah will continue.

Judah gives Joseph an account of what took place with their father Jacob before they came back with Benjamin. How Jacob protested against sending Benjamin and swore he would die if Benjamin didn't return.

Judah swore a pledge to be personally responsible for the return of Benjamin. Judah offered himself as surety for Benjamin's safety. Just as Jesus offered himself as surety on the cross if we placed our faith and trust in Him!

Now faced with that possibility Judah finally steps up and takes responsibility. Someone finally takes a leadership role.

What a picture of change in the life of one man, Judah.

In chapter 37 he heartlessly sold his brother Joseph for profit, without regard for his father's heartbreak.

In chapter 38 he was involved in deception and immorality by laying with what he thought was a prostitute which turned out to be his daughter in-law Tamar.

By God's Grace we see him in chapter 43 giving himself as surety for Benjamin.

And then in chapter 44 we see him in total submission to Joseph, offering himself as a slave in Benjamin's place so that his father would be spared heartbreak.

From selling his brother into slavery to becoming a slave in his brother's place.

From complete heartless disregard for his father to a deep sacrificial concern for his wellbeing.

This is the Grace of God. This is God, working in the heart of a man to the point of complete change, restoration and repentance.

THAT IS OUR GOD!!! AMEN?

## **Chapter 45**

### **READ 45:1-8**

A couple of points from this chapter.

Joseph's acknowledges God's hand of deliverance

Here in chapter 45 we once again see a display of great emotion on the part of Joseph. We really see the heart of Joseph here as his great desire is for reconciliation. He had clearly been waiting

for this moment for a long time and he could no longer control himself. He cries so hard and so loud that the Bible says the Egyptians outside the room heard him.

The guy is wailing away with tears of joy as he tells his brothers; ***“I am Joseph.”*** The Bible says his brothers were terrified. I think they were in shock. I can hear someone saying; ‘Joseph who?’ I’ll bet all of them were terrified thinking; uh oh we are so busted, we are in trooooooble!

But of course we know that’s not at all how it went down. Joseph tries to calm them and reassure them. He lets them know that all that has happened was by God’s plan, God’s design. Three times in the first 8 verses Joseph acknowledges God.

The hand of God was upon his life and the life of the Nation Israel from the beginning. We see God’s fingerprints all over this story, and we clearly see from this story a picture, of the heart of God, a parallel to the life of Christ.

There is no condemnation in Christ - He does not accuse us  
He wants us to be convicted of our sin, so He can restore us and save us!!!

He greatly desires reconciliation with a fallen world. He wants us to be reconciled to Himself. He wants us redeemed and restored.

And it all starts with His offer of forgiveness. Our Heavenly Father offered His Son Jesus to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Jesus willingly stepped down off of His throne, became a man and hung on a cross, in the greatest demonstration of love the world has ever or will ever see.

Joseph freely offered his brothers forgiveness – So to, Jesus freely offers us forgiveness – The forgiveness Jesus offers costs us nothing but cost Him everything – It is the Grace of God - For a

brief time Jesus gave up His throne, His rightful place – He became a servant – He allowed Himself to be mocked, beaten, bruised, humiliated, rejected, spat upon and killed!!! **WHY?**

**BECAUSE HE LOVES US AND HE WANTS US TO BE WITH HIM AND HE WANTS TO BE WITH US IN HEAVEN FOR ALL ETERNITY!!! AMEN? HALLELUJAH!!!**

What we also see in this chapter is Joseph's love for his father – his father is on his heart and on his mind. Five times in this chapter Joseph mentions his father.

Again, I believe this is a parallel or shadow of Jesus. His heavenly Father is always on His heart and on His mind. He speaks of Him often. It was Jesus' love for His Father and His desire to do His Father's will that brought him here to redeem us.

And as we will see in the coming months as we study the Gospel of John, Jesus continually talks about His Father in Heaven.

That's who sent Him

That's who He prays to

That's who He listens to

That's who He obeys

Over these last number of months, through our study of Genesis, I have come to a greater appreciation and understanding of the OT and how it relates to our own stories and especially God's story of redemption.

When I now read the OT I look for Jesus – I look for connections between OT & NT - I look for that line that God has drawn through His Word that started with Creation and goes right through the Book of Revelation and into Eternity.

I want to thank Pastor Silas for his leadership through the Book of Genesis. I know we have covered big chunks of Scripture each week but his vision in bringing it all to focus on Jesus and the redemption of mankind really has shown me how much God loves us and that He has a plan and a purpose for each and every one of us.

I see God using people like Jacob in spite of his deceitfulness  
And Joseph and the terrible betrayal by his brothers and his subsequent trials and tribulations

This story shows me that God can use anyone at any time in any situation to accomplish His plan and purpose, sometimes in spite of themselves.

How much more...

***“If my people, who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14***