

Genesis 42-45 – Joseph and His Brothers

God's Redemptive Work

Chapter 42 (Recap)

Joseph's brothers go to Egypt. Joseph recognizes them. Simeon is left in Egypt until Benjamin is brought back.

- Some Rabbinic traditions teach that Simeon was chosen because of his wrath. Joseph might have feared had Simeon and Levi been left together they would have attacked Egypt much like they did Shechem.

Chapter 43 (Recap)

We see Judah's repentance. The brothers bow before Joseph. They are invited to attend dinner with Joseph (his identity still unknown to them).

Chapter 44 (Recap)

Joseph sets up a test and takes Benjamin captive. Judah offers to take his place.

Chapter 45 – God's Redemptive Work

1-3: *Joseph could no longer keep his composure in front of all his attendants, so he called out, "Send everyone away from me!" No one was with him when he revealed his identity to his brothers. ²But he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and also Pharaoh's household heard it. ³Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But they could not answer him because they were terrified in his presence.*

4-8: *⁴Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please, come near me," and they came near. "I am Joseph, your brother," he said, "the one you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now don't be grieved or angry with yourselves for selling me here, because God sent me ahead of you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there will be five more years without plowing or harvesting. ⁷God sent me ahead of you to establish you as a remnant within the land and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. ⁸Therefore it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.*

9-15: *⁹"Return quickly 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 without delay. ¹⁰You can settle in the land of Goshen and be near me—you, your children, and your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and all you have. ¹¹There I will sustain you, for there will be five more years of famine. Otherwise, you, your household, and everything you have will become destitute.'" ¹²Look! Your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin can see that I'm the one speaking to you. ¹³Tell my father about all my glory in Egypt and about all you have seen. And bring my father here quickly." ¹⁴Then Joseph threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin wept on his shoulder. ¹⁵Joseph kissed each of his brothers as he wept, and afterward his brothers talked with him.*

25-28: *²⁵So they went up from Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. ²⁶They said, "Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt!" Jacob was stunned, for he did not believe them. ²⁷But when they told Jacob all that Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to transport*

him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. ²⁸ Then Israel said, “Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go to see him before I die.”

We see three vivid makers in this story of Joseph and his brothers.

- (1) Repentance
- (2) Forgiveness
- (3) Sharing

Repentance

Judah is at the center of repentance. Judah was quickly ready to sale his brother, Joseph, into slavery. Judah was choosing his personal life and emotions over his brother. Later, we see Judah willing to give his life for his brother, Benjamin.

Repentance is more than saying “sorry”. Repentance is a change of action. “I was doing this” ...now, “I’m doing this”.

Forgiveness

Joseph is an amazing example of a person who forgives. Think again about what his brothers did to him: they plotted to kill him (he overheard this conversation) and they settled on selling him into slavery. If anyone was tempted to hold a grudge it was Joseph.

Forgiveness is an expected response by believers despite the other person or circumstance. Meaning, we offer forgiveness regardless of the situation or person. In Matthew 6:12; Matthew 18:21-22.

Your ability to forgive reveals much about your walk with the Lord. The closer you walk with God, the more forgiveness you will extend to others. Why? Because the closer you walk with God the more aware you are of the forgiveness that has been extended to you.

Sharing

Not only does Joseph forgive his brothers, he invites them to enjoy his position. Joseph had been showered with wealth from Pharaoh. Joseph could have easily said, “I forgive you, go in peace”. But he does so much more...he shares all he has with the men that desired to see him dead.

The amazing part of the gospel is not just that God forgives us, but that we become co-heirs with Christ.

- Romans 8:15-17; 1 Peter 2:9-10.

Joseph sharing everything with his brothers is a wonderful picture of how we will be invited into eternity to share in all that Christ has store up. We will be invited to enjoy all that Christ has in the new heavens and the new earth.

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ What makes forgiveness difficult?
- ❖ What makes forgiveness easy?
- ❖ Why is forgiveness an important aspect of the believer’s life?
- ❖ Christ will share all He has in His kingdom with us...how should that truth impact us today?
- ❖ Are you doing all you can do to walk with God in this world...and what does that look like?