

## Genesis 45

### Verses 1- 3

**Then Joseph could not control himself in front of everyone standing before him, and he shouted, “Have everyone leave me!” So there was no one with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. <sup>2</sup> Then he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *about it*. <sup>3</sup> And Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were terrified in his presence.**

Joseph called for privacy because he knew he could no longer control his emotions. However, the Egyptian officials standing outside heard the weeping and reported it to the house of Pharaoh.

Joseph had already been told two times that Jacob was alive but he couldn't help but ask the question again. People often say things that don't make a lot of sense when they are in an extreme emotional state of mind.

His brothers were speechless because the brother they had hated and sold as a slave was alive and 2<sup>nd</sup> in command only to the king of Egypt. Benjamin was also speechless but for a different reason.

### Verses 4 - 8

**<sup>4</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come closer to me.” And they came closer. And he said, “I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold to Egypt. <sup>5</sup> Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save lives. <sup>6</sup> For the famine *has been* in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. <sup>7</sup> So God sent me ahead of you to ensure for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. <sup>8</sup> Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.**

**<sup>5</sup> Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save lives. <sup>6</sup> For the famine *has been* in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.**

Joseph was being very gracious in excusing their sin but he saw their sin and the events that followed as a means for God to do good for them and many others.

Someone might say, wait a second here; doesn't the bible also teach "you shall reap what you sow"? Yes it does! These men had lived with that guilt for 23 years and that was enough punishment.

See chart 4505 23 years

Ch	Person	Event	Age	Year
37	Joseph	Sold to Ishmaelites	17	1728
40	Joseph	Cupbearer and Baker	28	1717
35	Isaac	Isaac dies	180	1716
41	Joseph	Pharaoh's dream	30	1715
41	Joseph	Years of plenty	31-37	1714 - 1708
41	Joseph	Manasseh and Ephraim born	31-37	1714 - 1708
41	Joseph	Years of famine	38-44	1707 - 1701
45	Joseph	5 years of famine left	40	1705
46	Benjamin	5 years of famine left	33	1705
47	Jacob	5 years of famine left	131	1705
49	Jacob	Jacob dies	147	1689
50	Joseph	Joseph dies	110	1635

**<sup>7</sup> So God sent me ahead of you to ensure for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.**

Those who don't think God is good would say that Joseph needlessly suffered because of his brother's hatred and that is true but if God stopped mankind from every evil that they desired to do we would no longer have free will.

The point of this event and many like it in the bible is that God can take the evils acts of mankind and turn them into good for those who love Him. This way the suffering of mankind is limited (compared to what it could be) and we retain our free will.

There is a fine tuning between free will and suffering that God has addressed ever since man first sinned in the Garden of Eden. Only a God that is all knowing, all powerful, and perfectly good could do this. It is somewhat similar to the fine tuning argument that is well known within the scientific community.

Verses 9 -11

<sup>9</sup> Hurry and go up 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, do not delay. <sup>10</sup> For you shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your grandchildren, and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. <sup>11</sup> There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine to come, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.

<sup>10</sup> For you shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your grandchildren, and your flocks and your herds and all that you have.

See Map 4510 The land of Goshan



It is called the land of Rameses because Rameses was the leading city of the area. Goshen is an area of 900 square miles and it is still spoken of as the best pasture land in Egypt

See Map 4515





**<sup>11</sup> There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine *to come*, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.**

This worldwide famine was already a treat to many after 2 years and there were 5 more years to come. Jacob was a rich man, but he and his family would have become poverty-stricken before it ended.

Joseph was in a position that he could give his family the best land in all of Egypt to live in during the famine. However, there were several other very important benefits of living in Egypt.

1. Since the Egyptians detested shepherds there would be little chance of Jacob's posterity forming marriages with pagans, as had already begun to happen in the case of Judah.
2. They would also have the protective arm of a powerful government which would secure them against hostile attack.
3. Under these conditions, they would grow into a mighty Jewish nation.

God's promise that Israel would one day own all the land of Canaan would have to wait until Israel was ready (numerous enough & racially pure) to take over the land.

Verses 12 -15

**<sup>12</sup> Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. <sup>13</sup> Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.” <sup>14</sup> Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. <sup>15</sup> And he kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.**

**<sup>13</sup> Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.”**

Joseph had become one of the most powerful men in the world. This may have been one of the reasons why Joseph was able to forgive his brothers. God had completely reversed the fortunes of Joseph and his brothers and he had no reason to trifle with or get back at them. However, some people become more arrogant and demeaning toward others when they obtain a higher position in this life so we know there was more to his forgiving spirit than his new found position in life.

**<sup>14</sup> Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. <sup>15</sup> And he kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.**

His brothers may have wondered why Joseph had put them thru the wringer before he revealed himself to them but these tears of joy showed his true forgiveness for their sin against him. His brothers will still have doubts about Joseph and wonder if he will harm them after his father passes away but those doubts will not last long.

Verses 16 - 20

**<sup>16</sup> Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh’s house that Joseph’s brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. <sup>17</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: load your livestock and go to the land of Canaan, <sup>18</sup> and take your father and your households and come to me; and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.’ <sup>19</sup> Now you are ordered, ‘Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. <sup>20</sup> And do not concern yourselves with your property, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’”**

**<sup>16</sup> Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants.**

It is interesting that during the last 9 years, 7 good years and 2 bad years, when Joseph was in total control of Egypt, that he never tried to contact his father. Do you think that happened by chance?

See chart 4520

Ch	Person	Event	Age	Year
37	Joseph	Sold to Ishmaelites	17	1728
40	Joseph	Cupbearer and Baker	28	1717
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41	Joseph	Pharaoh's dream	30	1715
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**<sup>19</sup> Now you are ordered, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. <sup>20</sup> And do not concern yourselves with your property, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'**

The king gave an invitation to Joseph's family to live in Egypt (verses 17 & 18) but the offer of wagons to transport the family was put in the form of a command. This is the first mention of wagons in the Bible. These were two-wheeled carts suitable for a flat country like Egypt.

We can assume Joseph had the authority to do all of this on his own but the king wanted to show his appreciation to Joseph for saving his country. It is interesting that a Jew saved the land of Egypt and many years later a Jew (Moses) will destroy the land of Egypt. It is understood that the Lord both saved and destroyed Egypt but He did use two Jewish men to do his bidding.

#### Verses 21 - 23

<sup>21</sup> Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. <sup>22</sup> To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of silver* and five changes of garments. <sup>23</sup> And to his father he sent the following: ten male donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and sustenance for his father on the journey.

<sup>22</sup> To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of silver* and five changes of garments.

Joseph showed favoritism to Benjamin like his father had done to him. Seeing that it caused hatred and suffering to all of those concerned, this does not seem like a wise thing to do. Joseph, like all great men of the bible were blessed to have a leadership role but as we have seen all of these men had flaws in their character and these flaws were not hidden but rather highlighted that we might learn from their mistakes.

#### Verses 24-28

<sup>24</sup> So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, “Do not quarrel on the journey.” <sup>25</sup> Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan, to their father Jacob. <sup>26</sup> And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” But he was stunned, for he did not believe them. <sup>27</sup> When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, then the spirit of their father Jacob revived. <sup>28</sup> Then Israel said, “It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

<sup>24</sup> So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, “Do not quarrel on the journey.”

Some of the brothers probably saw other brothers as more responsible for selling Joseph to the slave traders and this could have led to a long and bitter argument on the long trip home.

**<sup>26</sup> And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” But he was stunned, for he did not believe them.**

Jacob had convinced himself that his favorite son was dead and that “truth” was more believable than the real truth. However, the idea that a Jewish boy would become 2<sup>nd</sup> in command of Egypt would be hard to believe. How could that possible happen! Oh that’s right; there is a God in heaven that can do all things.

**<sup>27</sup> When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, then the spirit of their father Jacob revived.**

Jacob needed some physical proof that his son was still alive, much like Thomas who would not believe until he put his finger in Jesus side.

It is amazing how the spirit of a person can be overtaken by grief and then instantly revived by good news. One of the great miracles that mankind will probably never understand is how God has interwoven the eternal spirit of man in this temporary body of flesh.

**Then Israel said, “It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”**

It would be another 17 years before Jacob would pass away.

See chart 4525

Ch	Person	Event	Age	Year
41	Joseph	Pharaoh's dream	30	1715
41	Joseph	Years of plenty	31-37	1714 - 1708
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