

Forgiveness and Reconciliation (Genesis 45:1-15)

- on of the most emotional stories in the Bible
- Joseph seen all brothers come back with Benjamin
- Joseph heard Judah offer himself in place of Benjamin

I. Joseph Reveals Himself To His Brothers (1-3)

A. Joseph can no longer control his emotions (1)

1. Judah's offer demonstrates his changed heart
 - a. Judah is example of passing all the tests
 - b. Judah is promised seed – head of the family
2. Now he knows that his brothers are different
3. He has tested their loyalty and love for one another
 - a. After 22 years – he can't contain it anymore

B. Joseph commands everyone out before revealing himself to his brothers

1. Wants a personal reunion
2. Don't want to incriminate, humiliate, or expose their deed to anyone
3. He wants reconciliation with his family

C. Joseph's weeping is heard by those outside (2)

1. Joseph is not just sniffing – wailing loudly
2. Joseph is broken and overcome by emotion

D. Joseph reveals himself to his brothers (3)

1. Exclamation – I am Joseph!
 - a. He is speaking in Hebrew to them
 - b. The interpreter is gone from the room
 - c. this Egyptian who has been terrifying them all these months?
2. Now instead of "your' father – he says – Is my father alive
 - a. Asking is his father in good health
 - b. they had previously said so – but Joseph wants to know for sure

E. Joseph's Brothers Shocked and Don't Answer

1. They are immobilized by the sudden revelation - Terrified
2. Lots of things going through their minds
 - a. Maybe they don't believe him fully
 - b. How will we explain this – what will he do to us?
 - c. Does he want revenge on us
 - d. They understand their guilt now before them
 - i. There can be no excuses, no more lies
 - ii. Their lives are in his hands and they know it
3. Joseph will now speak to comfort his brothers
 - a. He comforts them with forgiveness
 - b. His forgiveness is based in his understanding of God

II. Joseph Reveals God's Purposes In The Events (4-8)

A. Joseph Reveals God's Hand in All This (4-5)

1. He calls them near to ease their distress
 - a. Joseph initiates their reconciliation

2. He reminds them of what they did in selling him into Egypt
 - a. No one on earth other than Joseph and his brothers know this fact
 - b. This is proof that it truly is Joseph
 - c. 1st time Benjamin ever heard what they did to Joseph
 3. He tells them not be angry or distressed with themselves
 - a. He shows incredible grace and forgiveness
 4. He says God sent him here to preserve life
 - a. He can forgive because of his understanding of God's control, plan
- B. Joseph Reveals God's Purpose in All This (6-8)

1. God sent Joseph to preserve a remnant for the family
 - a. The famine will go on for another five years
 - b. There will be no relief anytime soon
 - c. Notice the "for You" in these statements
 - d. The promise of the seed of the woman is continuing
 - e. The promise to Abraham is continuing through these events
 - i. so salvation would come to the world
 - ii. If this family dies out – there is no seed of promise
 - f. This is God's hand guiding His purposes to fulfill His promises
 - g. Joseph is assured of God's providential hand
 - i. He has seen it for 22 years in everything
2. God has given Joseph station to provide for his family (8)

NOTE: Joseph can forgive his brothers because he sees God as providentially in control and working for the good of His will.

- often we feel we must right the scale of justice
- this keeps us from forgiving others

III. Joseph Sends A Message To His Father (9-13)

- A. The Brothers are commissioned with a message (9a)
1. The brothers are to report what they had learned
 - a. God has made Joseph Lord over all Egypt
 - i. Emphasis is on God making Joseph Lord of Egypt
 - ii. Joseph's dream has come to pass
 2. The Brothers are to summon their father to Joseph
 - a. Come down to me and do not tarry
 - b. You will live in Goshen and be near me (10)
 - i. Joseph wants them near – want them to be a family not just survive the famine
 - ii. Goshen is on the eastern edge of the Delta
 - land of plenty –
 - also keep them separate from Egyptians later
 - iii. Region that was favorable for herdsmen, Bedouins
 - c. All your family and possessions will live here

B. The Brothers are told the motivation for coming (11)

1. Joseph will provide for the family through the five years of famine
 - a. Even those brothers who wronged him

2. Jacob's household will be kept from poverty during the famine
- C. The Brothers are given the urgency of the message (12-13)
 1. Joseph assures them that they have seen the truth
 2. Joseph tells them to tell his father of all they have seen and of his honor in Egypt – My dreams have come true!
- IV. Joseph and His Brothers Reconcile (14-15)
 - A. So far Joseph has been the only one crying and emotional
 - B. Joseph moves to each of his brothers kisses them and weeps with them
 1. First on Benjamin – then others one by one
 - C. Joseph and his brothers talk with one another – for 1st time
 1. The alienation between them has ended
 2. The grief and pain and guilt has ended – family of God reunited
 3. The brothers are reconciled because of their repentance and Joseph's forgiveness
 4. Joseph's forgiveness is based in God's sovereignty

From human perspective – horrid, traumatic story – Joseph has every reason to be bitter, vengeful. Because of his trust in God – he able to forgive and reconcile.

Only way we can identify with Joseph is having our heart changed by the true seed – Jesus

- we are the brothers – we are the guilty ones – we need forgiveness
- It is offered to us freely – not just forgiveness but reconciliation
- he wants us to be near him – to be his family
- and when we see that forgiveness given to us – we can forgive others