

# The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture

## Week 13: Jacob's New Lease on Life

### Scripture:

Genesis 45:16-28

### Motivation (Why You Need This):

#### ***Where are we in the story?***

- Jacob's sons returned to Egypt with Benjamin to get food (Genesis 43:1-18)
- Arriving back in Egypt, Joseph's brothers were invited to eat with Joseph, although his identity was still unknown (Genesis 43:19-34)
- When his brothers left for Canaan, Joseph tested them by having his silver cup placed in Benjamin's bag, accused them of stealing, and said that Benjamin would remain in Egypt as a slave (Genesis 44:1-17)
- Judah begged for Benjamin's release, offering himself in Benjamin's place so their father would not be crushed by the loss (Genesis 44:18-34)

When we enter Genesis 45, the back and forth is over.

How do we possibly process wrongdoing against us, or circumstances out of our control after so much *time, emotional stress, and life* has passed?

There is only one way – we must not see this as Joseph's story, but God's plan.

### Information (What You Need to Know):

A 200-250 Mile Journey is Ahead of Joseph's Family - 15 to 20 Day Trip

As we closed last week, Joseph gave his brothers instructions, and it appears he followed up with Pharaoh. And because of the special relationship that Pharaoh had with Joseph, he was even more generous than Joseph.

**Proverbs 21:1 (ESV)** The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

**-Cyrus, King of Persia** - God stirred him to allow the Jews to return after exile

**-Artaxerxes, King of Persia** - Sent Nehemiah and provisions to rebuild after exile

**-Darius the Mede** - Decree that protected Daniel and directed the entire kingdom to fear God

**-Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon** - God clearly guided his heart, humbled him, and directed him to acknowledge God, the Most High Authority

**-Pharaoh during the time of Moses** - God used Pharaoh's resistance to demonstrate His power and glory.

**-Pharaoh during the time of Joseph** - God gave a dream to bring Joseph to Pharaoh.

God leads Pharaoh to be gracious and kind to Joseph and his family.

### **Joseph's Family is Blessed by Pharaoh**

**Genesis 45:16-20 (ESV)** When the report was heard (Joseph crying and carrying on) in Pharaoh's house, "Joseph's brothers have come," it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. **17** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your beasts and go back to the land of Canaan, **18** 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 shall eat the fat of the land.' **19** And you, Joseph, are commanded to say, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. **20** Have no concern for your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

### **Joseph's Brothers are Sent Back**

Load up and go back to Canaan

Come back with your father, Jacob

### **Joseph's Family is Given the Best of the Land (Goshen)**

Goshen was on the east side of the Nile Delta. The Nile Delta is situated amid the world's driest deserts and is where the Nile River empties into the Mediterranean Sea. The Delta roughly covers only about 2% of Egypt's Land area, but over 41% of its population lives there. This was an absolute choice piece of property.

### **Joseph's Brothers are Given Egyptian U-Hauls**

Pharaoh seeks to make the long 200+ mile trek easier on Jacob and the family. Egyptian wagons were used by the ultra-rich to transport people and valuable personal items. Pharaoh pours out generosity.

### **Joseph Sends His Brothers Back Home**

**Genesis 45:21-24 (ESV)** The sons of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. **22** To each and all of them he gave a change of clothes, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five changes of clothes. **23** To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey. **24** Then he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, "Do not quarrel on the way."

### **Joseph Provides New Clothes to His Brothers**

A change of clothes points to a change of situation or of destiny. I think Joseph has the most clothing changes when it comes to this idea in the Bible.

-Joseph's coat

-Joseph's coat was removed and covered in blood

- Joseph's slave clothes
- Joseph's slave clothes were removed
- Joseph's prison clothes
- Joseph's prison clothes were removed
- Joseph wears clothing to appear before Pharaoh
- Joseph received the robes from the King
- Joseph gives his brothers new clothes
- Joseph gives Benjamin 5 changes of clothes
  - Adam and Eve, from naked and sinful to clothed by God
  - Job tears his clothes after losing his children
  - Jonathan gives David his robe acknowledging him as the future king
  - David, after mourning the loss of his son, changed his clothes and worshiped God.
  - Ruth from broken Widow to beloved Wife
  - Esther from a stolen Orphan to an honored Queen
  - Lazarus from Deadman to Alive again - Remove those grave clothes

-Christians from Dead in our sins to Alive in Christ - This idea of clothing showing a change in destiny is carried into the New Testament by Paul, as he speaks of our transformation when we are saved in Christ. In Paul's letters, we get this idea of putting off the Old Garment/Self and putting on the New Garment/Self.

- Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:9-10, Ephesians 6:14-17

**Ephesians 4:22-24 (ESV)** to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, **23** and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **24** and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

**Colossians 3:9-10 (ESV)** But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. **9** Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices **10** and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Finally, Paul goes further for us in Christ. Helping us to grasp the need to walk, live, and walk in a headspace where we keep in mind not only our transformation, but we also daily face off against an enemy who despises us and wants to keep us from God's ways. So many struggle with sin, dealing with issues and decisions in their lives because they view Salvation as the ticket into heaven, and that is it. Thankfully, Paul gives us reality and reminds us that we are meant for eternity, not this world.

**Ephesians 6:10-17 (ESV)** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. **11** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. **12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. **13** Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. **14** Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, **15** and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. **16** In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; **17** and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, **18** praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

What if Joseph woke with little concern for what God had placed before him? Working in Potipher's House, then in Prison, or when he was called to serve Pharaoh? Thankfully, Joseph was a do-all-to-the-glory-of-God man.

These brothers have a new destiny. No longer struggling to survive in Canaan. They would now come to Egypt and enjoy the blessing that God had poured out on Joseph.

Did they deserve it? No, but God is gracious to sinners

### **Joseph Favors Benjamin**

Joseph continues his kindness to his brothers and shows extra kindness to Benjamin. This is nothing new for Joseph to show extra love and kindness to his whole brother.

### **Joseph Sends Provisions for Jacob**

Not only does Joseph send along the wagons of Egypt, but he also sends 10 male donkeys, 10 female donkeys, along with the provisions needed for the whole family's trip back to Canaan and a return to Egypt.

### **Joseph Calls for Peace**

Probably the most telling of Joseph and his brothers is Joseph's final command before they leave. "Do Not Quarrel Along the Way." Yes, his brothers are no longer hateful of Rachel's sons, but even among the tests before he revealed himself, they bickered and quarreled (Joseph heard everything) about whose fault it was and what all happened. In Joseph's heart, it was well and truly established that he had forgiven and saw God's perspective. But guilt and shame are the playground of the enemy. Joseph understood that the 25-day trip home could be a finger-pointing, accusatory battle. I appreciate commentator, *Daniel Emery Price*, who stated it like this...Guys, what happened then no longer matters. You don't need to even trouble Dad about all that. I forgive you. Focus on the Good News. I am alive. I am here waiting for you to come back, and our family will be blessed. Let it go!

We love to rehearse situations and at times our sins, failures, and brokenness. We fail to understand that when we surrender to Christ, our debt is paid in full. Our sin, failure, brokenness was exchanged for Christ's sinlessness. We no longer need to live as debtors. The price is paid, and we are free. Free from Sin. Our sin debt is paid in full. Stop identifying and wallowing in sin and brokenness. Stop practicing our sin.

Focus and remember who we NOW are. Remember what Christ DID for us. Never get over that.

**II Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### **Jacob's Sons Arrive Home**

**Genesis 45:25-28 (ESV)** So they went up out of Egypt and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. **26** And they told him, "Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." And his heart became numb, for he did not believe them. **27** But when they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. **28** And Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

### **Jacob Hears the Truth**

The brothers arrive home in Canaan to their father and their families. Immediately, they tell Jacob what Joseph told them to say. Most likely, it was Judah who spoke on behalf of the brothers.

### **Jacob's Unbelief**

After over 20 years of shenanigans from his boys, Jacob hears the words but does not believe them. Jacob tends to interpret everything through his pain of loss and not through the promises of God. After Rachel dies, he does not even bat an eye upon hearing that Joseph has been killed (no investigation or desire to see his body) (Genesis 37). When the brothers return from Egypt,

and Simeon is not with them, Jacob immediately assumes God was against him (Genesis 42). Jacob is interpreting life through his pain and wounds and not through God's promises to him. When they head back to Egypt with Benjamin, Jacob expects the worst (Genesis 43). And now, because of everything he has been through, Jacob is numb. He is broken, lost, and in need of evidence for hope.

His response is similar to the disciples' when they heard that Jesus had resurrected. Luke 24 - said that the disciples thought the idea of Jesus being resurrected was nonsense at that point. This is why Peter and John run to the Garden Tomb. Jesus shows them his wounds, sits, and has another meal with them. John 20- Thomas needed to not only see the scars but to touch them. God is not offended by doubt and offers us mountains of evidence to support His own existence and the work of Jesus. The disciples needed to see it for themselves.

### **Jacob's Joy**

Upon hearing the words Joseph told them to speak, and upon seeing the gifts and wagons, Jacob's heart was restored, and he believed. Jacob, like most people, had difficulty believing without seeing (without evidence). Remember, Jacob's thing was taking life into his own hands rather than waiting on God.

We often allow fear, loss, betrayal, disappointments to override our faith. God's promises go on the back burner and we allow the truth to be crowded out of our minds and hearts. I don't know about you but it seems easier to receive bad news quickly (we think it protects us from disappointments) and I need to question, verify, and study good news carefully (because I don't want to open myself for pain).

- He had difficulty when Esau wanted to reunite and created an elaborate strategy to protect the most beloved part of his family. And even after seeing Esau's joy in seeing him, he would not connect any further with him but rather chose to go the opposite direction.
- When God wanted to give him a blessing, he needed an all-night, no-holds-barred wrestling match to understand and experience God's work and blessing.

When people hear the simplicity of the Good News that salvation/New Life is accomplished through the work of Jesus on our behalf, and all we need to do is believe it, it sounds too good to be true. Surely I need to pay my part. This is the lie that catches up so many people. We think it is a scale that we can tip in our direction. I can catch up. I can pay my part.

The Bible describes us as DEAD in our sins. There is nothing a dead man can do to earn or merit forgiveness. Listen to Paul's words in Ephesians 2

**Ephesians 2:1-9 (ESV)** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. **4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

### **Application (What You Need to Do):**

Jacob needed to see and believe the evidence that was clearly presented to him. The evidence of God and his work is overwhelming and clearly available to us. We need to see and believe all that God has laid out before us.