

EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

Message #90

Genesis 45:1-15

Ephesians 1:11 says God works “all” things after the counsel of His will.

From Joseph’s life we have learned many lessons: **1)** If one accurately sets forth God’s truth, he may be hated; **2)** If one is faithful to God, he says no to temptation and that may bring immediate hardship rather than promotion; **3)** It may take years before God elevates one faithful to Him; **4)** Faithfulness to God eventually brings great reward; **5)** God literally fulfills prophecy, His brothers did bow; **6)** It is not wrong to require there has been true repentance. But of all of the lessons we may learn, this next one is perhaps the most significant of all. **The thing that enabled Joseph to completely forgive and restore his family, when they had done such terrible things to him, was the sovereignty of God !**

WHEN ONE IS FAITHFUL TO GOD, IT IS HIS REALIZATION THAT GOD IS SOVEREIGN THAT WILL ENABLE HIM TO COPE WITH ANYTHING IN LIFE AND ENABLE HIM TO FORGIVE AND RESTORE THOSE WHO HAVE WRONGED HIM.

The key to Joseph’s stability was the Sovereignty of God. The key to Joseph’s forgiveness was the sovereignty of God. Joseph was faithful to God and he knew God controlled all negative things that happened to him because He was leading him to where He Wanted him to be. Notice how often Joseph uses the noun God in these verses v. 5, 7 , 8, 9.

PERSONAL ACTION #1 - Joseph reveals himself to his brothers. 45:1-8

The context is critical - Joseph had just listened to Judah describe how he loved his father and brother more than his own life. Josephus says that this reality so overwhelmed Joseph that he could no longer “personate an angry man” (*The Complete Works of Josephus*, p. 53).

Joseph’s response to Judah’s sacrificial offer was very emotional. He broke down and wept in front of everyone (**45:1a**) and he dismissed all except his brothers (**45:1b**) and according to **verse 2**, he wept so loud that all in the house of Pharaoh heard it or heard about it. Dr. Allen Ross said the Hebrew words used here describe a real “emotional outburst” (*Creation & Blessing*, p. 672). The thing that prompted all of this was that Joseph realized his family was finally right with God and with each other and that they had truly repented .

Joseph identified himself to his brothers and the first thing he wants to know is whether or not his father is still alive (**45:3a**). **This is significant because it immediately demonstrated that Joseph’s interest was not one of personal vindication, but family reconciliation.** Joseph was not interested in getting even but in getting the family back together.

These brothers were speechless and “dismayed” (**45:3b**). That word “dismayed” means that these brothers were so frightened by what they had just heard that they were trembling and even had thoughts of running because they thought they would perish (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 104). The particular verb “dismayed” is a Niphal stem verb in Hebrew, which means these brothers viewed this news as reciprocal action. They viewed this as reflexive action which was now coming back upon them because of what they had previously done (Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, p. 137)

Now we get an amazing glimpse of the secret of Joseph's life and we learn how heavy theology, such as the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God, is practically worked out in real life situations. Joseph called his brothers to him (45:4) and he encouraged them not to grieve or fear because everything had been orchestrated by the Sovereign God (45:5). God had specifically directed Joseph to Egypt so he could preserve Israel (45:7-8). **Joseph saw all of this as God's sovereign program and even when he was experiencing negative things he knew God was in control and leading him.**

PERSONAL ACTION #2 - Joseph instructs his brothers. 45:9-13

Joseph immediately gave his brothers an assignment, namely go get dad and the first message Joseph wanted communicated to his father was that God had been in control of his life and had blessed him and elevated him (45:9). For over 22 years Joseph thought about his life and realized God had directed every step of it. Joseph requested that his father and children and grandchildren pack everything up and move to Goshen (45:10), which was a name of a region located in Egypt on the northeast side of the Nile (Merrill Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, pp. 492-493). Dr. John Davis said, this is "some of the best land in Egypt" (*Paradise To Prison*, p. 284). He is giving the best to those who have wronged him. This is not simply restoration but restoration to blessing.

Joseph would personally nourish all the family there during the five remaining years of famine. He wanted these brothers to testify that they had seen Joseph and all of his glory and quickly bring his father to him (45:12-13).

PERSONAL ACTION #3 - Joseph touches his brothers. 45:14-15

Josephus claims that when Joseph finishes his speech, all of his brothers were in tears. (*The Complete Works of Josephus*, p. 53). Tears of thankfulness, sorrow, remorse and happiness. It had taken 29 years but this family was now finally united because this family was finally right with God.

The thing that kept Joseph so calm, so wise, so faithful, so elevated, so useable, was his concept of and relationship with Almighty God. Joseph could cope with anything and could forgive anyone because of God's sovereignty. He proclaimed the truth of God because of God's sovereign work in his life. He forgave others because of God's sovereign direction in his life.

If one is trying to cover sin or run from making things right, you are against a sovereign God who will track you down. But if one will face sin, admit sin, confess sin that same sovereign God will permit you to experience His grace and lead you to wonderful new blessings. The thing that enabled Joseph to forgive his brothers and bless his brothers was the fact they admitted their sin and guilt. That is the story of Joseph's family and that can be our story too.