

GENESIS

Chapter 45

Joseph Provides for His Brothers and Family

Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, "Make everyone go out from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. 3 And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. 4 So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. 9 Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. 10 You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. 11 There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.' 12 And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. 13 You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." 14 Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. 15 And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him. 16 When the report was heard 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.'" 21 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." 25 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."

45:1 *no one stayed*. So that Joseph could protect his own reputation with the Egyptians, speak candidly with his brothers, and protect his brothers' reputation regarding their sale of Joseph into slavery. (TLSB)

45:3 *brothers ... were dismayed.* Either because they thought they were seeing a ghost or because they were afraid of what Joseph would do to them. (CSB)

The brothers feared vengeance. (TLSB)

45:4 *I am your brother Joseph.* See v. 3; Ac 7:13. This time Joseph emphasized his relationship to them.

45:5 *God sent me.* See vv. 7–9; Ac 7:9. God had a purpose to work through the brothers' thoughtless and cruel act (see Ac 2:23; 4:28). (CSB)

to preserve life. Joseph's Egyptian journey was a purposeful act of God, who sent him to Egypt to save thousands. God used the brothers' sin to do His saving work (Rm 8:28; cf Jn 17:12). (TLSB)

45:6 Joseph was now 39 years old (see 41:46, 53). (CSB)

45:7 *a remnant.* Although none had been lost, they had escaped a great threat to them all; so Joseph called them a remnant in the confidence that they would live to produce a great people. (CSB)

45:8 *not you ... but God.* The brothers were not the chief actors in Joseph's coming to Egypt. (TLSB)

father. A title of honor given to viziers and other high officials (in the Apocrypha see 1 Maccabees 11:32). All three titles of Joseph in this verse were originally Egyptian. (CSB)

Intimate adviser to Pharaoh. (TLSB)

lord. Chief servant within Pharaoh's immediate circle of family and leaders (42:6; 44:18). (TLSB)

ruler. Having authority over the country (41:40). (TLSB)

45:9 *do not tarry.* Joseph is anxious to see Jacob as soon as possible (see v. 13). (CSB)

45:10 *Goshen.* A region in the eastern part of the Nile delta, it was very fertile (see v. 18) and remains so today. (CSB)

Perhaps the primary Egyptian region for livestock. (TLSB)

45:12 *my mouth that speaks to you.* Not through an interpreter as before (see 42:23). (CSB)

45:14 *fell upon his ... neck.* The brothers embraced, with the head pressed against the other's neck. (TLSB)

45:15 *his brothers talked with him.* In intimate fellowship and friendship, rather than hostility or fear, for the first time in over 20 years. (CSB)

After they had recovered from their fear and were assured of his brotherly love. (TLSB)

45:18 *I give you the best of the land.* An echo of Isaac's blessing on Jacob (see 27:28). (CSB)

Some food was available, despite the famine. (TLSB)

45:19 *are commanded*. Pharaoh's authority ensured the family's welfare. (TLSB)

wagons. Most people traveled by walking or by riding animals. The wagons would spare Jacob and the little children much difficulty. (TLSB)

45:20 *Have no concern*. Luther: "Do not let your possessions hinder you. Whatever you cannot sell because of this famine, leave it behind" (WA DB 8:183). (TLSB)

45:22 *to Benjamin he gave*. Joseph expressed special love for Benjamin, without any fear of brotherly resentment. (TLSB)

45:24 *Don't quarrel*. Joseph wanted nothing to delay their return, and he wanted them to avoid mutual accusation and recrimination concerning the past.

Although forgiven, the brothers had to take care not to fall into such sins once again.

45:26 *heart became numb*. Disbelief and shock deny him joy. (TLSB)

45:27 *spirit ... revived*. Jacob's sorrow over the loss of his sons brought him to the point of death. Cf 42:38. But when he saw that his 11 sons had come back, and learned that Joseph was alive, it was as though he had come back to life. (TLSB)

Ch 45 Joseph reveals himself, reassuring his brothers. With Pharaoh's full support, he sends for his father and family. Jacob is finally convinced that his son is alive. God rules the world and brings evil to a good end for the sake of His people, as He did with Joseph's slavery. Let us pursue Joseph's virtues—humility, wisdom, forgiveness, care for parents and family. And let us not quarrel in our Christian journey, but hold fast to the mercy and doctrine that God has revealed. In Christ, our sin is forgiven, and God gives us the joy of reconciliation and new life. • Lord Jesus, the evil that happened to You on the cross was for our good. Give us the benefits of Your death, and form our lives to Your cross. Amen. (TLSB)