



## The Sermon

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Genesis 45:1-15

November 27, 2022

"All According to God's Plan"

TRANSCRIPT

And so today we find ourselves in Genesis chapter 45. And so as you have your Bible, I would invite you to join with me for the reading of God's Word. The title of this message is "All According to God's Plan. All According to God's Plan." I want to begin reading in verse 1, and as I read this, be reminded this is God's inspired and inerrant and infallible Word. "The grass withers, the flower fades away, but the word of our God abides forever. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and able to pierce as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. For there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

So the most powerful instrument that you will ever hold in your hand is a Bible, is the Word of God. And here at Trinity Bible Church, as even our name suggests, we wholeheartedly believe every jot and every tittle of the word of God, every word, every line, every verse, every chapter, we believe it is all come from God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

And so what we have here was written some 3,400 years ago, 3,500 years ago, was written by Moses after the fact; and as he was given this truth by the Lord Himself, and through other means of research, it has been recorded for us, and it is relevant, it is current. It speaks to every person here today. It speaks to every life. It has something extremely important to say to each  
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and every one of us. So it matters not whether you're male or female, young or old, retired, working; whoever you are, this Book is so supernatural that it addresses every person exactly where they are at their point of need. So it's been well said there's only one interpretation of a passage of scripture, but many applications. And so, by God's grace, I will give the accurate interpretation of this; but the application will fall upon each person's life in unique ways, depending upon where you are in your life, in your Christian life, or if you yet need to come to faith in Christ.

So this is not a small part of the service to read the Word of God. This is the only part of this service for which we can claim perfection. Even my sermons will have flaws in it. Even hymns that are written can have flaws in it that we just sung. The only part of this worship service that is absolutely flawlessly pure and perfect is what you're about to hear is the reading of God's Word.

So Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and to teaching." So it was the established apostolic pattern that when the Word would be preached, it would first be read, so that the hearer would understand what is about to be expounded and explained. So that's Sermon Number One, OK. So now, Sermon Number Two. Let me read this passage, Genesis 45 beginning in verse 1.

"Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, 'Have everyone go out from me.' So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it. Then 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.

"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 into slavery. Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. 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. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great

deliverance. 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. 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 delay. You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. There I will 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.'" Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of your brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. Now you must tell your father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.' Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him."

It would be hard to find a more emotion-packed passage in all the Word of God than this. Let us go to the Lord and ask for His assistance.

[Prayer] Father, as we come to Your Word we do need Your assistance. We need the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth, to be our primary teacher, to instruct us, to open our eyes, to behold wondrous truths in Your Word, to bring it home to our hearts, to challenge us, to comfort us, to convict us, to direct us, to mature us. And so we don't want this passage to go in one ear and out the other. We don't want this passage to be left behind. So, Father, by Your Holy Spirit, work this passage into the very fabric of our soul. We are a needy people today. We are in need of a greater grace. And we pray now that You would take this text and minister it to us, for Jesus' sake. Amen. [End]

In these verses we see the dramatic moment when Joseph reveals his true identity to his brothers. It has been 22 long years since they sold Joseph into slavery, and they presume he is dead, that they'll never see him again, that he's been buried. For Joseph, his first 20 years in Egypt have been difficult years, having been separated from his father as a teenager and taken to a foreign country, separated from his family at age 17. He's now in Egypt, and he has been purchased in a slave market by Potiphar to be a servant slave in his house, where he served Potiphar. Potiphar's wife has made advances at him, and he resisted. She accused him of rape falsely so,

and he was condemned and thrown into prison, where he was confined for many years.

All of this adversity and tragedy was set in motion by the wrong that Joseph's brothers did to him. So what will Joseph say to them after these 22 years? What will he have to say to them? Will he rebuked them? Will he confront them? Will he condemn them? Will he express an unforgiving spirit? Has he been nursing a grudge all these years? Will he threaten revenge? Will Joseph express anger at God?

To the contrary, Joseph demonstrates an amazing faith in God, and not just God in a general way, but he expresses in this passage for you and me to learn what must be our anchor point for our soul. Joseph, he expresses his faith in the sovereignty of God. He expresses his faith in the providence of God, that God is in control of all the circumstances and all the events of his life, that there is nothing random, that there is nothing that is out of the control of God, and God is working through all things for a higher and greater purpose. That is the testimony that he gives us in this text, and it must be my testimony, it must be your testimony, because there's not a one of us in this room today who goes through life on easy street. Every one of us, as we walk the narrow path that leads to life, it is met with disappointment, it is met with unexpected difficulties, it is met with trials and temptations, and we must have really a grand understanding of God's overruling providences over the affairs of our lives.

This has been a repeated theme. And I know it may even sound somewhat like a broken record, as we've been going through Genesis. But it is the point of focus that we are intended to take from this, and it is this faith and trust in God, in the sovereignty of God, in the providence of God – listen to this – that prevents Joseph from having a bitter spirit, from having an unforgiving heart, from being angry with God. He has faith in God who is enthroned in the heavens and who is working through all of the events and circumstances through which he has passed. God is not the author of sin, and God is not the author of evil; however, God does work through sin, and God does work through evil for a greater, far more glorious purpose. And that is exactly what is happening here in Joseph's life, and it is what is happening in your life, whether you recognize it and realize it or not.

So let's walk through this passage. We need to have this narrative, these 15 verses etched upon our mind. So let's walk through this. The first thing I want you to note is "the emotional outburst." Beginning in verse 1, all of the pent up emotion that is welling up in Joseph can no longer be contained. This is a dam break, and the tears that have been welling up can no longer be hidden.

So we begin in verse 1 the word "then." And that's actually an important word, because it tells us what follows here takes place immediately after the end of the previous chapter. So as soon as Judah has finished his message, his speech that we saw last week, "Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him." To this point Joseph has maintained self-control of his emotions as his brothers have stood before him, and he has refused himself and gone to another room to cry. He doesn't want to make known his identity to them by having this emotional meltdown in front of them.

But it has now reached a point where it says, "He could not control himself, in a sense, before all those who stood before him," - that would refer to not just his brothers, but his servants and his guards and his attendants and his counselors, et cetera - "and cried." He cried. It's a very strong word for "cried" here. It's not a whimper. It's not a muffled cry.

When I first came across this word, I was preaching at a Shepherds' Conference about 20 years ago in Los Angeles, and I was preaching on Jonah. And in Jonah 3:4 Jonah began to go through the streets of Nineveh, and he cried out, saying, "Forty days and Nineveh will be destroyed." It's a loud voice. It's used in some places for the roaring of a lion. And that's the very word that's used here: "He cried." Oh, he began to weep and to sob, and he's dissolved into tears. He's overwhelmed with deep emotions that had been pent up and building for 22 long years.

And so Joseph says in verse 1, "Have everyone go out from me," everyone except the brothers - all the house servants, the palace guards, the personal attendants. "Everyone is to vacate. This is too personal, this is too private, what I have to say to my brothers." And so it reads, "So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers." So he's alone now with them.

Verse 2 says, "He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him." He doesn't just cry, he weeps. And "weeps so loudly" is actually three different Hebrew words that are all just meshed together, and the idea is "put out loud noise with weeping." And it's just hard to bring it into the English language, but it speaks of layers of tears that are just flooding out of his eyes and rolling down his cheeks and dripping off of his chin. "So loud that the Egyptians heard it," the Egyptians here referred to those who have left the room, they're in other parts of the palace. But no matter where they are in this large house in which Joseph lives, oh, they can hear the wailing.

And then at the end of verse 2, "and the household of Pharaoh heard it." They heard it down the block. I mean, Pharaoh's living in another house, and all of his servants can hear the cry of Joseph rising and filling their ears. This is quite the scene. These tears needed to come out of Joseph, just like there are times in your life when tears need to come out of you. There are times when it is unhealthy to repress your emotions, and there are times when it is appropriate for you to cry and to weep. Solomon said so in Ecclesiastes 3:1, "There is an appointed time for everything." Verse 4, "A time to weep and a time to mourn." And that's exactly where Joseph is. He is in a puddle; he is in a pool; he is in an ocean of tears.

And this leads us now to verse 3, "the personal disclosure." Now that the room is cleared of all outsiders and it's only Joseph and his brothers who remain, verse 3, "Then Joseph said to his brothers," the moment of disclosure has now come. And even with the inflection of my voice I cannot convey to you the emotion in the power of these three words. He says, "I am Joseph!" There's not a more dramatic moment that is imaginable. And to this point he has revealed himself by his Egyptian name, because he's now living in an Egyptian culture. And now to make himself known to them he uses his Hebrew name, the name that they heard their father call him when he was a little boy, the name that they addressed him with when they lived together up in Canaan. He was always Joseph, he was never the Egyptian name. And so this is such a poignant moment. "I am Joseph!" The veil is pulled back. He steps out of the shadows of anonymity and into the spotlight, and He makes himself known to them.

And please note his concern. His concern is not for him, his concern really is ultimately not for them, though he loves them. He says, "Is my father

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still alive?" His father is his chief concern. He wants to know, "Is he still alive?" And in the previous chapter, you'll recall in Judah's speech, Judah has already said that if Benjamin does not return home up to Canaan with us, that our father who has gray hair, he will be let down to Sheol in sorrow, meaning he will die if Benjamin does not return. And so Joseph needs this reassurance, this confirmation. And so he asked the question again, "Is my father still alive? Tell me one more time. Tell me again that my father is still living on the earth, because I have to see him before he dies."

And please note in the middle of verse 3, "but his brothers could not answer him." Could not; they didn't have the ability. Why? Because they're dumbfounded, they are shocked, they are stunned that Joseph is alive and Joseph is standing right in front of them. They are like a frozen statue. They stood mute in speechless terror.

Notice, it doesn't say they would not answer, it says they could not answer. I looked up this word "could," and it means to have the ability to do something. Their mouth was frozen shut. They couldn't muster up a word to say. They were in shock. And it says at the end of verse 3, "for they were dismayed at his presence." The word "dismayed" means that they were terrified, they were alarmed. It was like they'd seen a ghost. It would be like you attended a funeral for a family member, and you were seated on the front row, and the casket is right here, and in the middle of the service you feel someone tap you on the shoulder, and you look over and it's the person in the casket. You would be shocked to death. You would have nothing to say. You would just be frozen. That's exactly where they are.

So, verse 4, "Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Please come closer to me.'" That would indicate to me that they fell back, or stepped back, better. "This is Joseph?" And Joseph has to bid them now to "come closer to me" so that they can actually verify that this is their brother Joseph.

"And he said," and now he says it a second time, and I want you to note how he says, "I am Joseph," a second time, but he adds two descriptives at the end of verse 4: "I am your brother Joseph who you sold into Egypt." He says this not to shame them, he says this to clarify for them, "I'm not just any Joseph, I'm Joseph your brother. I'm Joseph, the one you remember, that

you've sold to the slave traders as they came through in the caravan through Canaan. I'm that Joseph," to remove any doubt that this might be a different Joseph. The amazement, the shock, as Joseph now reveals himself to them.

And before I go any further, that's exactly what happened in your life when you were converted to Christ. The Bible says there was a veil over your eyes, 2 Corinthians 4:4, that Satan the god of this world had veiled your eyes and prevented you from seeing Christ for who He truly is. Oh, you may have grown up in church, and you may have had a part in the Christmas program, and you may have known your lines and you knew the definitions, but you never really saw who Jesus is and your need for Jesus, until that moment when the scales fell from your eyes and you suddenly saw Him for who He is. And just as Joseph had to initiate this self-disclosure to his brothers, so the Lord Jesus Christ has initiated His self-disclosure to you. You didn't find Him, He found you. You were the one who was lost, He was the one who was seeking.

So we come now to verse 5, and I want you to see "the spiritual insight," the spiritual insight. To put his brothers at ease and to calm their fears, Joseph gives theological insight. He gives them a lesson in sound doctrine, he gives them a lesson in theology, because, ultimately, that's the firm foundation you need if you are to be calmed and for you to have strength.

And so look at verse 5: "Now do not be grieved or angry." Why would he say that? Because obviously, they are grieved, and they are angry. This isn't hypothetical. They are crushed in their innermost being, and they are angry with themselves, this says, and the reason is they've been carrying this guilt for 22 years of how they have sold their brother down the river and that he is now dead, and they've had to carry the shame of this silently within their own bosom. And now Joseph appears, and they are grieved over their own sin, and they are angry with themselves. They're not angry with Joseph, they're angry with themselves, because they are the ones who hatched the plot to conspire to put him down the river.

"Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here." He's consoling them, he's not scolding them. We see a remarkable spirit of forgiveness in Joseph. But I want you to see what's next. This is

what's most important: "For God sent me before you to preserve life." The key for everything is God.

God is mentioned four times in these five verses. You'll notice in verse 5, "For God sent me"; verse 7, "God sent me"; verse 8, "It was not you who sent me here, but God"; verse 9, "God has made me." What Joseph has is a theocentric God-centered faith and worldview. He sees everything that happens to him in life through the prism of God. And he understands the sovereignty of God. He understands the providence of God. He has strong faith in God. And when he says, "God sent me," we could stop and say, "Wait a minute. It was these brothers who hatched this conspiracy to put him to death, to sell him to the traders. It was these brothers who then lied to their father about why he's gone, that some animals ate him up.

But Joseph says, "No. I know all that; I was the one you did this to. But there is a far higher, far higher purpose that God has had through all of this in sending me here. No, you didn't send me here, the devil didn't send me here, fate didn't send me here, bad luck didn't send me here; God sent me here." He understands that he is in Egypt by divine appointment. And this is the whole theme of Joseph's story in a nutshell. You didn't even have to come the last three months. I mean, this is it, this is the bottom line, that God providentially has control over Joseph's life, and that God is the one who directed his steps down into Egypt, though God was working through secondary means and contingencies. Through their evil plans and through their sinful acts; nevertheless, it was God who was over it all, and God who was moving this all forward to His predetermined end. God had a higher purpose for their evil acts against him.

Now you may be thinking, "Does God work through evil for greater good? Does God work through sin for greater good?" Of course He does. Look at the cross. Look at Calvary. Look at Golgotha. It was the crime of the ages. It was the first-degree premeditated murder of the second Person of the Trinity, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. "You nailed Him to a cross," Peter said on the Day of Pentecost. "Yet, it was according to the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God. It was all God's plan, it was all God's purpose, from before the foundation of the world. Jesus was the Lamb of God slain from before the foundation of the world. And how God chose to bring it about was through the hands of reprobates, through the hands of those who were the non-elect, through the

hands of those who were sinful and who had committed a heinous crime against heaven. Of course, God can work, even through sin and evil, to bring about a greater good. No, our theology, our doctrinal understanding, everything begins with God.

I remember R. C. Sproul explaining to me, and I've probably shared this with you before. "But Steve," he said, "the doctrine of God," which we call theology proper, "the doctrine of God, the being of God, the attributes of God, the existence of God, the names of God, the works of God, the triunity of God, the decree of God, that is the greatest area of theology, and it is the lens through which we see every other doctrine and every other truth through the lens of who God is.

This is why Joseph has such a mature and profound understanding of life, because he sees God for who He is, and how God relates to his life. This is your greatest need today, to see your need for a greater understanding of who God is. It's not for you to have a greater understanding of the culture. It's not for you to have a greater understanding of the flow of history, what's going on around us. Your greatest need is to know who God is.

A. W. Tozer wrote a book *The Knowledge of the Holy*, and he begins by saying that the greatest need in anyone's life, the most important issue in anyone's life is who God is. You tell me who God is, and I'll tell you how the rest of your life will unfold. I'll tell you how you respond and how you react to the issues of life. It all pivots with, "Who is God?" That's right where Joseph is: "It is God who sent me. Brothers, not you; that's why I'm not bitter at you. It is God."

Now verse 6, "For the famine has been in the land these two years." So they're two years into this seven-year famine. And by the way, this is a good marker for us. This lets us know that right now Joseph is 39 years old, that he was 17 when he was taken captive and brought down to Egypt. He's been there for 22 years, and so he is now 39 years old.

"For the famine it's been in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. So we still have five years to go." And it's interesting here. The indication is that for

these first two years of the famine, they still plowed, and they still did some small amount of harvesting, just some crumbs that would fall from a vine or a plant that they could put on the table. But after two years, there was no more plowing and no more harvesting, because the ground is as dry as can be, and there is nothing that will grow.

So, verse 7, he repeats what he just said in verse 5: "God sent me before you." Now when he says "before you" he's speaking chronologically that "God sent me here to Egypt 22 years before you have now come down from Canaan." And he reinforces this, because this is so important. Great teachers teach by repetition; and he is reinforcing this major point: "God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth." Now that's interesting. Not only has Joseph been sent here to preserve the whole nation of Egypt by accumulating enough food for the seven years of the famine, but he says, "for you." And do "you" refer not to the Egyptians, but to his brothers and to his father. And when he says in verse 7, "a remnant in the earth," he's talking about the remnant of the nation Israel.

And here's the big picture to open up the lens and see the macro. Joseph had to come down to Egypt, and Joseph had to go through all that he has gone through, so that there would be food preserved for the seven years of the famine, so that his brothers would have food to live, so that they could have children and perpetuate the Jewish race. What a strange providence this is, that the very ones who have committed the sin are the ones who will receive the benefit from Joseph.

"And to keep you alive by a great deliverance." And so Joseph understands that God in His goodness and God in His kindness has sent him to Egypt through the secondary means of his evil brothers so that there will be food to keep them alive, so that the promises that were made to Abram that "a great nation shall come from you, and it will affect the families of the earth," that Joseph understood that he was sent by God to fulfill even the Abrahamic promises that there will be a great nation that will come through his brothers who have betrayed him. There's an amazing complexity and profundity to this.

Verse 8, "Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here," that's negative denial, "but God," that's positive assertion. There's no way for them to

misunderstand what Joseph is saying here: "It wasn't you, but it was God." It's the third time he mentions God here. "And He" - God - "has made me," - and he now gives three titles; first - "a father to Pharaoh" - that that's a way of saying his chief advisor - "and lord of all his household," - that means master over the palace - "and ruler over the land of Egypt," - that means all dominion has been put into his hands, and he has supreme authority over the entire dynasty of Egypt. Now you may say, "Wow, he's really bragging on himself." No, look at it again: "God has made me. It's God who's done this."

I remember when I was in college walking into a friend's dorm, and he was working in Christian ministry with me, and he had a poster on the wall, and like out in West Texas where I went to school, it was a fence line and fenceposts, and there's a turtle up on top of one of the posts. And the caption said, "The turtle didn't put himself there." It was an obvious point. Someone had to come along and pick up the turtle. I'll explain it after the service if you need further insight in the most obvious thing. You know, someone had to come along and pick up the turtle and put it on the fencepost.

That's what Joseph is saying: "I was nobody from nowheresville, and God sent me to Egypt, and God picked me up like this turtle and put me on the throne and put me in the palace and put me in control." No, it wasn't Joseph bragging on himself, it was Joseph bragging on God.

And let me just say the same is true in your life. Whatever success you have, even in a horizontal worldly plateau, whatever promotion you ever have, it's really not you, it's God. It is God by His sovereign hand has chosen to pick you up and to promote you and to put you where He places you. And as long as you know that, you're going to do OK with God. But if we ever get the idea that "it's me a little better than someone else," then God can also take that turtle off the fencepost and put him back where He found him.

So this is where Joseph is, and this is where you are. You need to know God. You need to know who God is. You need to know the sovereign hand of God. You need to know the providence of God and how this affects your life.

Well this leads us now to verse 9, "the principal concern," the principal concern, that's in verse 9. And it starts with the sense of urgency. He says, "Hurry and go up to my father." Why would he say that? Because his father, he knows now from Reuben, from the previous chapter his father is old, his father has gray hair, his father is in danger of being put into Sheol, which is the place of the dead, and die in sorrow. He must see his father before his father passes away. And so that's why there is this sense of urgency: "Hurry and go up" – up meaning topologically up to Canaan, which is to the north – "to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph.'"

Now what is the first word that is supposed to come from their mouth when they go back up to Canaan and when they talk to their father Jacob? What is the first word that is to come out of their mouth? Is the word that Joseph has given to them: it is God. You can see it right there in your Bible: "God has made me lord of all Egypt. That's what your goat to go back and say to father." It's the fourth time God is mentioned in this passage. "That is, God who has preserved me. It is God who has elevated me. It is God who has laid His hand upon me." And all of this is to set up to say, "Come down to me, do not delay. God is at work in my life, father. Come quickly, and I will bestow blessing upon you."

He says in verse 10, "You shall live in the land of Goshen." That's some pricey real estate, Goshen. That's the fertile district east of the Nile River close to Memphis, which is where the royal court was where Joseph lives. That's the sweet spot, that's the center of the filet of Egypt. "Father, come down; and we're going to live together in Goshen, and you shall be near me," – Joseph – "and your children," – his brothers – "your children's children, your grandchildren." In other words, "You're not going to just come down for a weekend, you're going to come down; we're all going to live here together." And then he adds, "and your flocks and your herds and all that you have." He's wanting his father to come so he can see his father, but also so he can take care of his father.

Verse 11, "There I will also provide for you." And the idea is, "As you once provided for me, I will now provide for you." That's what children do. They were totally dependent upon their parents when they were young, and there comes a point now where they need their children's help and assistance. "So you come down, and I will reciprocate, and I will take care of you as you

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once took care of me, for there are still five years of famine to come." Joseph understands how hard it is for an older man to move. There's a sense of security of living in the same house, or in this case, the same tent in the same Bedouin area of Canaan. And it's quite a step of faith.

I saw my father go through this. I was raised in a house in Memphis, Tennessee. My mother passed away. He was left there to live by himself, until it came to a point that he needed to sell the house where he had raised me and my brother and sister, and moved to Nashville to move in with my brother who's a physician, so my brother could care for him. And it was an easy decision for me. It was heart-searching for him to pack up everything and move to a different location.

That's what Jacob is going through here. And that is why Joseph has to keep pleading for him to come. And then he adds, "and you and your household, so that you will not be impoverished. If you stay in Canaan, Dad, you're not going to make it. You're going to be impoverished. You're going to have to sell the land. You're going to have to sell my brothers. You're going to sell yourself into slavery. There's no way you're going to make it. You must come down and come down now."

Verse 12, "Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you." Do you know what this means? He's having to stress to them, "You are not hallucinating. This is not a ghost that is speaking to you. You see my lips moving. You hear what's coming out of my mouth. I am Joseph, and I am here to speak to you, and my words will minister to you and help you."

So, verse 13, "You must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt." The word "splendor" there is translated hundreds of times in the Old Testament as "glory." It's the Hebrew word *kabowd* and it means heavy or weight. And the weightier someone's assets were, that meant they had more gold and more silver, and they had more influence, they had more power, they had more property. That's the very word that's used here, "all my glory, all my splendor in Egypt." He has an abundance of wealth. He has a palace. He has servants. He has high position. He has limitless provisions and limitless access to the food that is being stored up. "You must tell my father of all

that I have, to lure him, motivate him to come down, and all that you have seen. You must hurry and bring my father down here."

You know what's commendable about Joseph at this point is the utmost concern that he has for his earthly father. The fifth commandment is, "Honor your father and mother." And what a Christlike thing it is to honor your parents. Even as Jesus hung on the cross, He said, "Mother, behold your son. Son, behold your mother." In His dying breath He took care of His mother.

Some of you may have been raised and in unbelieving home. Could be your father or mother we're not Christians. For some of you, you may have suffered abuse. But nevertheless, you are to honor your father and your mother. And that is what Joseph is doing here. First Timothy 5:8 says, "If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel, is worse than an un believer." So maybe for those of you who have parents who are still alive, maybe you need to call your parents. Maybe you need to write to your parents. Maybe you need to go visit your parents. Maybe you need to show honor and affirm your love for them.

The last thing I want you to see is verses 14 and 15, "the physical embrace." Verse 14, "Then he" - Joseph - "fell on his brother Benjamin's neck." He just draped himself, meaning he has become so weak from his crying and his weeping he can barely stand up, and he just puts both arms around Benjamin's neck and puts his weight on Benjamin's shoulder, and it says, "and wept," - he just cried and cried and cried in this emotional embrace - "and Benjamin wept on his neck." And the tears are just streaming down his cheeks and flowing onto Joseph's clothing as they are in this embrace.

In verse 15, "He kissed all his brothers." I mean, there's no bitterness here. There's no unforgiving spirit. He has unconditional love for them. He understands that in the providence of God and in the sovereignty of God, "God gave me the father that He gave me, and that He gave me the brothers that He has given me, and that coming down to Egypt by their dastardly deed was just a part of a larger master plan for my life for greater blessing to come to others." And so rather than berating the brothers, he blesses

them, and he kisses them. It says, "He kissed all his brothers." He just went down the line and repeated this physical embrace of kissing, smothering them with kisses and putting his arms around them. And then adds, "and wept on them." Not wept before them, wept on them. It speaks to how the tears are just flooding down upon his brother from his eyes that are like a fountain of tears, and that his arms are wrapped around them as well.

Joseph rises above the fray that so often we become entangled in of not forgiving and not erasing the past, but choosing to carry it and carry it and carry it. No, Joseph is a far better man than that, and he is this by the grace of God in his life. His brothers have not even had a chance to say anything. Joseph has done all of the talking and is the one who has taken the initiative to demonstrate love and to be the reconciler and to be the peacemaker and to take the first step. And at this point, they are still stunned. They are speechless that it's Joseph, "and he's not angry with us."

And at the end of verse 15, after a while, it says, "Afterward," after this embracing and kissing and weeping and hugging. "Afterward his brothers talked with him." Only now can they gather themselves, gather their thoughts, collect their emotions. They must have had a billion questions to have asked him. "How's it been for you these last 22 years?" And no doubt, as they talked with him, there would be untold number of confessions of the wrong that they had done to Joseph.

But Joseph has made it through these 22 years without a support system, without people around him who were believers, in a foreign country having been unjustly punished. Joseph has made it simply on the truth that God has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty reigns over all, Psalm 103:19, that in God's sovereignty, God is all-wise in every decision that He makes in the affairs of providence is the perfect decision at the perfect time, and that God is all-loving, and that God has His own best interest at heart, and that all of this has been necessary to carry out and bring about the greater good of the remnant surviving the famine, because it will be through this remnant that will come the greater Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will step out of eternity and into Bethlehem, who will be born of a virgin, who will come into this world to be Immanuel, God With Us, to be Jesus who will save His people from their sins. All of this is necessary to prepare the stage of history for the coming of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is one of many links in the chain that will proceed the coming of Christ, but it is absolutely necessary. If there had been a break in the chain here hypothetically, then the royal line, the messianic line would have evaporated and gone away. And so Joseph, not knowing as fully as you and I now know the whole story, nevertheless understood this, that he is here in Egypt by divine appointment, and that "it is God who has sent me here."

How does this relate to your life? How is this more than just a true account that occurred so many years ago? It is very simply this, that it is God who has sent you to Dallas, it is God who has sent you to Trinity Bible Church of Dallas, and you are here by divine appointment for reasons and purposes far beyond even your understanding and my understanding. And we must trust in God through the different detours that have brought us here, through the different intersections where we've had to make decisions and we've gone one way instead of the other, through the complexities of life, through the adversities that we have faced. It's all just been a part of a larger master plan that God has for your life and for the kingdom of God. And God is at work right now in ways far beyond what you and I can even understand.

We need to know this in these dark days in which we live, in which our nation is just going up in flames of insanity, as this world has become Sodom and Gomorrah revisited. We need to be reminded that God is nevertheless at work in ways that we may not be aware at this moment, and He may be setting the stage even right now for the return of His Son Jesus Christ for His bride. And so we need to be all in with Christ, and we need to be able to say, "God has sent me here, and there are purposes and reasons." No one is here by mistake, but by divine providence. How this will play out in your life as you leave here today, I urge you to give careful thought to your life as you think about the last months, the last year, the last years that have led up to this. God has been weaving a tapestry that involves your life.

If you're here today without Christ, you desperately need a Savior. You desperately need someone to represent you before God. You desperately need a Redeemer and a Reconciler, and there's only one, and that is the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ. You have no hope but in Him. If you will put your faith and your trust in Jesus Christ, He will save you. But if you choose to go your own way, I must tell you the truth: you will be cast down

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into hell forever and you will burn in the lake of fire and brimstone without end, and there will be no relief for your suffering throughout all the ages to come. You may never have an opportunity like you have this very moment for you in your heart of hearts to commit your life to Jesus Christ and to be received by Him, and for Him to wash you and cleanse you and forgive you; and one day when you die, for Him to take you to the Father's house, and there to be in the immediate presence of God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. That is the issue that is in front of you. And if you will believe upon Christ, He will save you. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, thank You for Your providence over our lives and for the care with which You watch over us. And I pray for my brothers and sisters here that You will unusually bless them this day, in Jesus' name. Amen. If you would stand now for the closing benediction. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance on you and give you peace. May that be your experience this day. God bless you.