

GENESIS 45:1-15 (THE LORD IS REVEALED)

Introduction: For weeks and weeks now, we've been looking at the coming reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers and between Jesus and Israel. There have been so many matching patterns that it is obviously something God does not want us to miss.

It is a central theme here and it continues to be a central theme throughout the entire Bible. But what we could and should ask is why? Who cares if God and Israel are reconciled? The Jews are about one percent of one percent of the population of the world. They are an insignificant number in comparison to the multitudes of people on God's green earth.

And of the Jewish people of today, the vast majority are not right with God. This is completely apparent. So why is this plan which is pictured in Genesis, expanded on throughout the Bible, and shown to be fulfilled in Revelation so important to Him and to us?

The answer is painfully clear when we understand God's character, and it is exceptionally important in how we perceive our relationship with Him. Concerning His character, He has spoken a set of promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and so on.

If these promises are truly from Him, and if the Bible is truly His word, then His very integrity is tied up in this book and the promises it contains. If even one of His promises were to fail, then He isn't God and we have our faith in the wrong place.

And that brings us to the second point - how we perceive our relationship with Him. If we believe the Bible is true and was given to us by the God who cannot lie, if we really believe that... then there are promises that we can hold to and there are obligations imposed on us.

If God's promises to Israel fail, then the promises to us aren't trustworthy either. And the responsibilities we have then aren't really that important. Going and making disciples doesn't really matter if God doesn't keep His

promises. Other than making a lot of money through a false religion, there really is no imperative to do what Jesus said.

And this is exactly why the church, so long ago, absconded with the promises to Israel. Israel was destroyed. There were only a few scattered Jews and it seemed to be that those promises had failed. Unless... well unless they now belong to the church. But many of them were very specific - places, names, and so on.

And so not only did they assume that the promises must be for the church, but that they were spiritual or allegorical. Or, even more stupidly perceived, that they were already fulfilled - "Yes, this is speaking of the past..." When in fact they had never been happened. The Lord says in Amos 9:15 -

"I will plant them in their land,
And no longer shall they be pulled up
From the land I have given them,"
Says the LORD your God."

That obviously has never happened, because that was written about 750BC and they were cast out of the land from AD70 until 1948. So how could the church make such a stupid claim? It's because they know the God of the Bible is the true God and so these things must somehow apply to the church, even though they really don't.

This is why these stories and their fulfillment are so important. Because our very understanding of God, history, integrity, and our religion are tied up in them. When you turn away from the importance of Israel, especially Israel of today, you turn away from a sound relationship with God.

And along with that goes your solid foundation in those promises which have been made by Him to you. This is the importance of Israel. Everything is tied up in God's promises to Israel.

Text Verse: ²⁵ "Thus says the LORD: 'If My covenant *is* not with day and night, *and if* I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, ²⁶ then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, so

that I will not take *any* of his descendants *to be* rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.” Jeremiah 33:25, 26

Either the Bible is God's word or it is not. If it is, then it is absolute truth, even the things we may not like or the things which we dismiss because we don't understand them. But by continually digging into this word, we will be molded into a right understanding and a right relationship with God. So let's go to the word now and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. I Am... (verses 1-5)

¹ Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him,

In the previous chapter, Judah, picturing the representative of all the Jewish people, made an impassioned plea for his brother Benjamin. He offered himself in exchange for him because he knew that without him, his own father would die in the anguish of his soul. After hearing his words and seeing that there was truly a change in him, it says Joseph couldn't restrain himself.

The word is *le'hitapek*. It is the same word used to describe him in Genesis 43:31 when he controlled himself after weeping over Benjamin at the meal they shared. There it said, "Then he washed his face and came out; and he **restrained** himself, and said, "Serve the bread."

This time the opposite occurred, instead of being able to restrain himself any longer, he lost all control of his emotions. The Hebrew is emphatic and it shows us he was without any emotional restraint.

^{1 (con't)} and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!"

When we read this verse, because of the way it's worded, we can't help but get a mental image of the situation, and we are prone to make intuitive guesses as to why he made everyone leave the room. My thought was

always that he didn't want any of his servants to see him reduced to a state of tears.

This is certainly true, but the Geneva Bible added in another reason I hadn't before considered. They said it was, "...because he wanted to cover his brother's sin."

That is now two reasons. And a third which comes to mind is that his true identity was only known to a select few around him. Revealing himself in the open would then reveal who he was to those who were not supposed to know. The question is, "Would that serve a positive or a negative purpose?"

Would knowing he was a Hebrew, and once a servant, help or make things worse. If you can see this in the light of the tribulation period, the whole world will be coming after the Jews as never before. Connecting them to Jesus in this intimate way would only serve to increase the troubles, not lessen them. The world has already rejected Christ and they hate Him.

The intimacy of this meeting serves several purposes and is intended as a picture of the future as much as it is of the reconciliation of these brothers in the distant past.

The tribulation also serves several purposes. One is to destroy the wickedness on earth just like the Flood of Noah did. One is to bring reconciliation between God and Israel. Another is to usher in the Kingdom Age where Christ will sit on the throne and rule over the earth from Jerusalem. Each step of Joseph's revealing of himself parallel's this unveiling, or revelation, of Jesus Christ.

^{1 (con't)} So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

And so, with only the sons of Israel present, Joseph is made known to his brothers. Remember, there is a famine in the land. The word of God is available, but it will come at a cost. But to Israel, there will be a special revealing of the Lord.

As this meeting is in Joseph's house, I'm guessing that the same thing will happen in the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. The Bible makes it perfectly clear that there will be another temple in Jerusalem. And so it is probable that what we are seeing here is something that will be revealed *in that future temple*.

The details aren't clear, but the overall picture of what is coming has been given. He will reveal Himself in a way which only Israel will hear, but as Jesus says in Luke 8:17, "For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor *anything* hidden that will not be known and come to light." The message will go out...

²And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.

The opening word of this verse is *v'yitten*. It signifies giving something, or putting something out. The literal translation then would be "And gave forth his voice in weeping." In other words, loud cries went out.

It was more than merely sobbing out loud, but it was the deep gasps of air which are followed by loud groans which simply cannot be restrained. Joel 3 is written not about the past, but about the future. The first few verses of that chapter make this certain.

Later in the chapter, we read the following which sounds like an incredible parallel to Joseph's revealing of himself to his brothers -

The LORD also will roar from Zion,
And utter His voice from Jerusalem;
The heavens and earth will shake;
But the LORD will be a shelter for His people,
And the strength of the children of Israel.
¹⁷ "So you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God,
Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain.
Then Jerusalem shall be holy,
And no aliens shall ever pass through her again." Joel 3:16, 17

Joseph's weeping was heard by Pharaoh, the Great House, picturing heaven, and by the Egyptians, picturing the gentiles. The roar of the Lord will be so great that both heaven and earth will shake. The message will go out to the world at that time. And again, in Revelation 14:10, we see the same thing -

"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—⁷ saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

³Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph;

The astonishing revelation is now made. Until this point, they only knew him as Zaphnath Paaneah, the Savior of the World. But suddenly the connection is clear. *Joseph* is the Savior of the World. Put yourselves into the place of the Jews at the temple when this revelation is made. "*I am Jesus.*" Jehovah is revealed for who He truly is. The Lord of Creation is their own brother in the flesh.

Concerning the words, "I am Joseph" Matthew Henry shows the connection all should make - "Thus, when Christ would convince Paul, he said, I am Jesus; and when he would comfort his disciples, he said, It is I, be not afraid. When Christ manifests himself to his people, he encourages them to draw near to him with a true heart."

The speaking of the name is the revealing of the person. In the case of Joseph and in the case of Jesus, the connection sparks the emotions of the soul. Israel will hear and their eyes will be opened to what they had so long been blinded to.

^{3 (con't)} does my father still live?"

His first question isn't "Are you surprised?" Nor is it, "Why did you do this to me." Instead, to direct them to something relevant and thus indicate his

good will toward them, he asks about dad. And although it is formed as a question here, John Gill interprets this rather as a statement of fact.

It would be like us saying "Isn't it great?" Saying that actually means "It is great." The words are, *ha'owd abi khai* - "Yet my father does live." Gill's comment says that "he puts this question not through ignorance, or as doubting but to express his affliction for his father, and his joy that he was alive"

In a prophetic sense then, this is seen as a positive statement from Jesus to those in the temple. "I am Jesus *and Israel* is still alive. There is hope and I am here to provide it to you." This is certainly the message being conveyed here.

³ (con't) **But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.**

The word dismayed is appropriate. They were literally shocked at what they now perceived. First, they were in shock at who Joseph was and the position he filled, and secondly they remembered their past crimes against him.

The comparison to Jesus is perfect. Those Jews who had for so long resisted Him, but who knew the story of how he had been crucified... *were all true*. This Christ isn't just a Jew, but the ruler of all things, and they will feel the guilt of the crimes of the past.

*I have not come to destroy you, but to call you back, you see
What is past is past, it is over and done
I am Jesus your Messiah, come unto Me
I am your Lord and your Brother, I am God's own Son*

⁴ **And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me."**

The words of James, writing to the 12 tribes, so closely match those of Joseph, that the Holy Spirit must have had this particular verse from Genesis in mind. Listen, and compare it to what Joseph just said, "Draw

near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded." James 4:8

What James says is so perfectly represented here and is so exactly showing what the future holds for Israel, that it cannot be coincidence. Joseph asks his brothers to come near and Jesus does the same. In the act, the hands are cleansed, the hearts are purified, and the minds become clear.

⁴ (con't) **So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.**

Whether Jesus actually speaks the words or not, the implication from the entire New Testament and the past 2000 years is that "I am Jesus your Brother whom you crucified and then sold off to the Gentiles." Every sentence spoken is showing us what is coming.

⁵ **But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.**

This verse, right here, is one of the finest examples of God's sovereignty and providence in the entire Bible. God never authors evil, and Joseph isn't implying that God was the cause of the evil committed, but God uses the free-will choices of men, which include evil, to effect His purposes.

The brothers sold Him, but Joseph says that God sent him ahead to preserve life. What man does, God knows will happen. And so He uses these things to bring about His overarching will. His brothers sold him off as a slave, but God sent him as their savior. Jesus is written all over the story.

*Do not be angry with yourself, repentant sinner
Though your sins were counted in the pain of the cross of Calvary
Because through His shed blood you are now a winner
A saved and cherished soul, loved by God for all eternity*

The connection between this verse and what is described by Peter in Acts 2 is a perfect match. There he says -

²²"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— ²³Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴ whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it." Acts 2:22-24

God's purpose for Israel in Joseph's ordeal was to preserve life. God's purpose for Israel in Jesus' trials was to save the lost. In both cases, man's wickedness was used by God for a good end.

II. All a Work of God (verses 6-11)

⁶ For these two years the famine *has been* in the land, and *there are still five years in which there will be* neither plowing nor harvesting.

The Bible says that the famine of Egypt was for seven years. It also tells us that the tribulation period will be for seven years. However, nothing is said about any specific thing that will happen at the two-year point of the tribulation. But these two years are past and so Joseph is asking them to focus on the remaining five.

Five in the Bible is the number of grace. While there is neither plowing nor harvesting, the family of Israel will be sustained by grace. And so the picture here isn't one of exact dating, but that the believing Jews who have received Jesus will be sustained, by grace, throughout the duration of the tribulation period.

And this premise is supported in both testaments of the Bible. The faithful remnant will be saved. It is hinted at in the next verse...

⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

Joseph now repeats that it is God who sent him ahead of them to save them. In this, he uses the term *sheerit*, a remnant, which will be preserved

through the trial. God has always promised to save a faithful remnant of Israel. This is not an isolated concept, but one which permeates both testaments of Scripture.

And this includes the tribulation period which is being pictured here. In Romans 9:27, quoting Isaiah 10, Paul says, "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved."

It is this remnant of Jacob who God will save as Joseph says, "by a great deliverance." This is, again, explicitly referred to in Scripture. Daniel 12 says this -

"At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people;
And there shall be a time of trouble,
Such as never was since there was a nation,
Even to that time.
And at that time your people shall be delivered,
Every one who is found written in the book." Daniel 12:1

The entire span of the Bible is pointing to the great culmination of the ages and it is all being pictured right in this beautiful story of grace and reunion between once-estranged brothers. The magnificence of how God has woven the account of Joseph into the account of Israel's history is simply astonishing.

⁸So now *it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.*

This is the third time that Joseph has said that it was God who sent him. But, the first two times he said only "God." This time he says it was, *ha'elohim*, "**the** God" who did it. And in this verse Joseph's exaltation and his relationship to Pharaoh are openly stated.

This then, unlike before, speaks of Jesus' divinity. He is not only the crucified Man of Israel, but he is the exalted God of heaven. To be made a

"father to Pharaoh" means, as the Jewish scribe Jarchi puts it, "to have a share with him in power and authority."

As we saw in Peter's quote in Acts, Jesus was delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God. But Peter didn't stop there. A few chapters later he continued the connection to Joseph in these words -

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. ³¹ Him God has exalted to His right hand *to be* Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:30, 31

Not a verse, nor even a word so far has failed to point to Jesus, Israel, or the end times. And the exciting thing is that these pictures very well may come to their fulfillment in our generation. That is how close I believe we are.

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."

As suddenly as he revealed himself to them, he now turns his attention to his father. And so again, the characters must be identified. The brothers are the leaders representing the individual tribes in Israel. Jacob is Israel the people, and Joseph is Christ the Lord. Egypt is the land of the Gentiles.

This verse is similar to what he said earlier. He tells them to say that "God has made me lord of all Egypt." The brothers sold him off to Egypt, but he said that God did it. And it was Pharaoh who elevated Joseph to the lord of the land, but he says that God did it.

In every word, we see Joseph's understanding of the providence of God in all things. How different that is of Jacob his father who just a few short chapters ago had completely failed to understand the reason for all the trials that had befallen him over the years! In this verse Joseph also said to them, "Come down to me, do not tarry." The urgency of his words reflect what Jesus said in Matthew 24 -

¹⁵ "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened." Matthew 24:15-22

This time that Jesus speaks of is future and it is just at the midpoint of the tribulation, or 3 1/2 years into the tribulation. This is the reason for Joseph's words, "do not tarry." There is a time which is coming which will be worse than any other in human history and Jesus will save them through this.

In His instructions, he tells them to "flee to the mountains." Nobody is sure where, but many believe that it will be to Petra in Jordan, a gentile land. If so, then the pattern perfectly fits the words of Joseph.

¹⁰ You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have.

Here, Joseph names the land where they will live, Goshen. The name Goshen means "drawing near" or "approaching." Taken in the context of the end times, and especially Jesus' words in Matthew 24, the connection seems obvious. They are to flee because the Great Tribulation is drawing near... couldn't be clearer.

¹¹ There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for *there are still five years of famine.*"

Joseph says there are five years of famine to come. These five years, representative of grace, are what will be given to Israel during the

Tribulation. In Revelation it says that the Israelites who take Jesus' advice and flee will be nourished in the wilderness during final portion of the tribulation.

III. Benjamin, The Son of the Right Hand (verses 12-15)

¹² “And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that *it is my mouth that speaks to you.*”

Joseph tells them to trust their eyes and their ears. Their eyes can clearly see that he, not an interpreter, is speaking to them. The Hebrew tongue is being conveyed to them by the lord of Egypt who has said he is their brother and therefore it must be him.

Benjamin is being singled out because he is the full brother of Joseph, but God included this because he pictures those Jews who have called on Jesus. This includes, implicitly, Paul who descended from Benjamin and who authored much of the New Testament which is directed to the Gentiles. In other words, *the Christ of the nations is the Messiah of the Jews.*

*How did we miss what the gentiles perceived?
How could we not see that the Messiah is our Brother?
For so long, by our own eyes we were deceived
Jesus is our Lord and Savior - He and not another!*

¹³ So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here.”

The glory they have seen is the glory they are to tell of to their father. And the glory of Jesus which will be revealed to the leaders of the tribes of Israel is that same glory that they are to reveal to the people of Israel. The temple will stand, the Lord will come, and there will be little time to prepare.

Even if these pictures aren't what God intended for us to see in these passages, they still reveal exactly what is coming according to the rest of the Bible. In other words, these pictures *are* exactly what God intends for us to see.

¹⁴ Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept,

The Hebrew here interestingly says, "And he fell on the *necks* of Benjamin." The word is plural. The only commentator who mentions it at all says he probably wept on the left and then he wept on the right. But that is still one neck. Why would God allow such an odd plural word in here unless He wants to show us something.

Benjamin certainly only had one neck and so this must be intended to be viewed prophetically. Those Jews who had already called on Jesus and who had remained steadfast in their faith, even before He revealed Himself to Israel, are those who will have gained His greatest favor. As they are a group, meaning plural, He will weep tears of joy over them.

¹⁴ (con't) **and Benjamin wept on his neck.**

And these many, when they are shown to have been vindicated in their faith, will weep tears of joy over Him. Therefore, this second time the word "neck" is used, it is in the singular. Amazing detail!

*The Lord is revealed and over His brothers He weeps
A reunion so long anticipated has finally come about
Israel now knows Jesus and the covenant He keeps
And through tears comes the joy and a praise-filled shout*

*God's love for His people is eternal and sure
He has directed the ages for the sake of Israel
So they can worship Him in a way undefiled and pure
Covered by the blood of Christ, as the Bible does tell*

***¹⁵ Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.**

And finally in today's verses we see the tender display of love towards all of the brothers. The transgressions of the past, the many years of separation, and the trial which has just ended have all been swept under the joy of reunion and brotherly love.

They once tossed Joseph into a pit and sold him as a slave to the gentiles. And Israel once sent their Lord to the tomb and then sold Him off to the gentiles as well. But the reunion has arrived and what is past is past. Joseph and his brothers; Jesus and Israel. How can we not stand amazed at what God has done and is doing for His people - all pictured in these ancient stories?

Though the details are many, and there is much to be learned from these passages, maybe too much to grasp at once, understanding these early Genesis stories gives us a sure foundation in understanding the rest of the Bible. And that message is clear...

God has a plan, God is in control, and God can be trusted. This is certain. And because God sent Jesus to save us, then we can trust that Jesus can really do just that.

Closing Verse: Indeed the Lord has proclaimed

To the end of the world:

“Say to the daughter of Zion,

‘Surely your salvation is coming;

Behold, His reward is with Him,

And His work before Him.’”

12 And they shall call them The Holy People,

The Redeemed of the Lord;

And you shall be called Sought Out,

A City Not Forsaken. Isaiah 62:11, 12

Next Week: Genesis 45:16-28 (The Spirit of Jacob is Revived) (113th Genesis Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you and He has a good plan and purpose for you. Call on Him and let Him do marvelous things for you and through you.

I Am Your Brother

Then Joseph could not restrain himself
Before all those who by him stood
And he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!"
I say, leave us alone now if you would

So no one stood with him, not a servant or any others
At the time that Joseph made himself known to his brothers

And he wept aloud, his resounding cries did emit
And the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it

Then Joseph said to his brothers:....

"I am Joseph; does my father still live?"
But his brothers could not answer him
For they were dismayed in his presence
And so an answer they could not give

And Joseph said to his brothers
"Please come near to me"
So they came near, according to his druthers
They came near to him obediently

Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother
Whom you sold into Egypt, it is I and not another

But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry
With yourselves because you sold me here
For God sent me before you to preserve life
So that Israel does not disappear

For these two years the famine has been in the land
And there are still five years in which there will be
Neither plowing nor harvesting for the farmer's hand

And God sent me before you not by chance
But to preserve a posterity for you in the earth
And to save your lives by a great deliverance
To save you from the terrible times of dearth

So now it was not you who sent me here, but God
And He has made me a father to Pharaoh, you understand
And lord of all his house, everywhere I trod
And a ruler throughout all of Egypt, the land

“Hurry and go up to my father
And say to him, ‘Thus says Joseph your son
“God has made me lord of all Egypt
Come down to me, do not tarry to see your beloved one

You shall dwell in the land of Goshen
And you shall to me be near
You and your children, your children’s children
Your flocks and your herds, and all that you have - do not fear

There I will provide for you to keep away the fears
Lest you and your household, and all that is yours
Come to poverty for there are still five years
Of famine from the heat and wind outdoors

And behold, your eyes tell you what is true
And the eyes of my brother Benjamin
See that it is my mouth that speaks to you

So you shall tell my father making him serene
Of all my glory in Egypt, both far and near
And of all these things that you have seen
And you shall hurry and bring my father down here

Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept
And Benjamin wept on his neck
Away, the missing years were swept

Moreover all his brothers he kissed
And wept over them, this he did too
And after that his brothers he had so long missed
Talked with him, many years they needed to review

This beautiful story of reconciliation and grace
Is given for us to see what yet lies ahead
Someday Israel will finally look upon Jesus' face
And know He alone is their life-giving Bread

For so long they have missed the spiritual boat
But God has been faithful to them all along
Just as He said He would be in the Book that He wrote
And someday over them He will sing a joyous song

And He sings over you and I when we to Him in faith turn
And seals us with His Spirit for that glorious redemption day
It is for this marvelous moment that our heart should burn
And of this precious Savior we should ever say...

Great, glorious, and awesome God
Help us in Thy majestic light always to trod

Hallelujah and Amen...