

I. Introduction.

II. Joseph is reconciled to his brothers. 45:1-28

A. Background:

1. Joseph's brothers had terribly wronged him. 37:18ff
2. Joseph is elevated from the prison to the palace. 41:1ff
3. Famine forces Joseph's brothers to seek grain from Egypt. 42:1ff
4. Joseph, while keeping his identity hidden, tests his brothers. 43-44

B. Joseph reveals his true identity. v. 1-3 Acts 7:13

C. Joseph comforts his brothers. v. 3b-15

1. What must the brothers have been thinking and feeling? v. 3b 50:15
2. Joseph makes every effort to reassure his brothers. v. 4
3. Joseph acknowledges God's hand in all that has happened. v. 5-8 50:20
4. He even encourages them to forgive themselves for what they had done. v. 5
5. God's plan all along had been for the house of Israel to go to Egypt for four hundred years to become a nation there. 15:13-14
6. Joseph offers to generously provide for his family in Egypt. v. 9-11,13 Ruth 4:15
7. Joseph showers loving affection upon his brothers. v. 12,14-15

D. Pharaoh expands upon Joseph's generosity. v. 16-20 Pr. 21:1

E. Joseph sends his brothers back to retrieve Jacob and all their clan. v. 21-24

F. Jacob receives the amazing news and is revived. v. 25-28 43:14

**III. Joseph models biblical principles of peacemaking and reconciliation. Eph. 4:32
Mt. 6:12,14-15 Ps. 103:10-12**

A. Forgiving is forgetting the offense. Jer. 31:34

1. In what sense does God forget our sins? 41:51 Jer. 31:34 Ps. 103:10-12 Ro. 5:19
2. Forgiveness involves treating the offender as if the offense had never occurred.
3. Forgiveness includes not bringing it up against them, nor talking about it with others, nor even thinking about it. 41:51 Jer. 31:34 I Co. 13:5

B. Forgiving involves loving the offender. II Co. 2:7-8

1. Take initiative in restoring the relationship.
2. Comfort them in their guilt, fear and grief. 45:3-5
3. Openly express your affection to them. 45:14-15
4. Rather than expecting them to try to make it up to you, minister to their needs. 45:10-13 50:21

IV. Forgiveness is grounded upon trusting God.

A. Remember that God is just (and that you are not God). 50:15-19 Rom. 12:17-21

1. You are not to bring justice (vengeance) against those who hurt you. Js. 1:19-20
2. Trust that God will bring justice in His own time and way.

- B. Remember that God is sovereign, and trust that He is at work even when others sin against you. 45:5-8 50:20 Rom. 8:28 11:33 II Cor. 12:7-9 Js. 1:2ff**
- 1. God is able to use human sin to bring about His good plan. Acts 2:23 Ro. 8:28**
 - 2. Give thanks to God for what He is doing. I Th. 5:18**
- C. Remember God's grace and how He has freely forgiven you. Eph. 4:32 Luke 7:40ff Mt. 6:12,14-15 18:21ff Titus 3:5-7 Col. 3:12-13**

V. Questions.

- A. What if you don't want to forgive? Phil. 4:13**
- 1. The Bible commands us to forgive. Mt. 6:14-15 Eph. 4:32**
 - 2. Forgiveness is granted, not necessarily felt.**
 - 3. Those who don't forgive suffer the consequences. Heb. 12:15 I Pe. 3:7**
 - 4. God will equip and enable you to forgive and minister to those who hurt you.**
- B. What should you do if your brother is not repentant? Mt. 18:15f Gal. 6:1f**
- 1. There is a sense in which forgiveness and reconciliation cannot fully take place if the other party is not repentant.**
 - 2. You may need to graciously confront the offender. Mt. 18:15f Gal. 6:1-2**
 - 3. Sometimes it is impossible to bring about reconciliation. Mt. 18:17-18 Rom. 12:18**
 - 4. You never have license to be bitter.**
 - 5. It appears that Joseph treated his brothers as forgiven long before they actually asked him for forgiveness. 50:15-21 I Co. 13:5 Mt. 5:44ff**
- C. How does Joseph's story help the victim of abuse?**
- 1. We can forgive because God first has forgiven us.**
 - 2. We can trust that God is sovereign over all things and has a good purpose.**
 - 3. God will deal with the abuser in His own time and way.**

VI. How does this passage point to Christ?

- A. God predetermined that Jesus, like Joseph, must suffer that He might save His people. John 18:11 Acts 2:23 4:28 13:27**
- B. Joseph's forgiveness of his brothers beautifully portrays Christ's forgiveness of us.**
- 1. He does not count our sins against us.**
 - 2. He not only forgives us, but enriches us. II Co. 8:9 II Pe. 1:2-3 Ro. 8:32 Phil. 4:19**
 - 3. He invites us to draw near unto Him. 45:4 Mt. 11:28-30**
 - 4. He gladly receives all who humble themselves before Him. Js. 4:6 I Pe. 5:5**

VII. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions

1. How does Joseph illustrate the principle that forgiving involves forgetting?
2. What promises do you make when you forgive someone?
3. What does Joseph do to show his brothers that he has truly forgiven them?
4. What should you do to help those who seek your forgiveness?
5. What should you do if you don't feel like forgiving someone?
6. How was Joseph able to forgive his brothers?
7. How does Christ help us to forgive others?
8. Should you forgive someone who is not repentant?
9. How does Joseph point to Christ?