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Joseph Made Himself Known to His Brothers

45: 1-15

Joseph made himself known to his brothers DIG: Why was Joseph able to freely forgive his brothers for what they had done to him? Are his brothers convinced of his forgiveness (see 50:15-21)? Why or why not? As Yosef reveals himself and who he really was, how did he also make God known for who He is, has been, and will be? Based on Joseph's story how would you define *divine providence*? What five ways did Joseph foreshadow the life of Christ?

REFLECT: What makes restoring a broken relationship so difficult? What makes attempting to restore a broken relationship so worth the effort? What is the best way to initiate a reconciliation process? Joseph said four times that God was behind the events of his life (verses 5, 7, 8, 9). How does looking at the big picture of life help a person deal with past hurts and injustices? When in your life have you enjoyed *divine providence*? What is the one thing you have learned from Yosef's story that would be most helpful to share with someone experiencing tough times? Is there a person in your life that needs your forgiveness? Or is there a person that you need to ask to be forgiven?

Joseph was approaching **his** fortieth birthday. **He** was the prime minister of **Egypt** and had worldwide power. **He** had wealth that staggered the mind. **He** had a royal chariot pulled by matching stallions, and wherever **he** went people would bow before **him**. **His** fame had reached around the world. **He** had a mansion of breathtaking beauty. **He** had a beautiful wife and two handsome sons, and a wonderfully close relationship with **God**. But **his** dream had not come true. **He** was separated from **his** brothers and **his** aged **father Jacob**, whom **he** loved dearly. **He** had everything but a reunion with **his** family.

No longer could there be any doubt in **Yosef's** mind that **his brothers** were completely changed **men**. **He** had subjected **them** to the most severe tests, and **they** had passed with flying colors. The testing itself had been a means of spiritual growth for **them**; **they** were more conscious than ever of the leading of **God** and **their** responsibility to **Him**. **They** were more aware than **they** had ever been of **their** own unworthiness and of **God's** mercy. Finally, **their** troubles had brought them **all** closer together, and now **they** were of one

mind, loving one another and their **father**, as **they** had never done before.

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" What **he** was about to say would have been inappropriate for anyone outside the family to hear. **So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his eleven brothers (45:1).** Even though the servants may not have understood what **he** was doing, **he** was so forceful, **they** obeyed nonetheless. And when **he** was left alone with **his brothers**, **he** cried out to **them** that **he** was **their brother Yosef**, the one **they** thought was dead.⁶⁸⁴

71. Both Joseph and Jesus were men of compassion. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard him (45:2). Seven times we read of **Joseph** weeping. First, **he wept** as **he** listened to **his brothers** confessing **their** sin (42:24). Second, **he wept** at the sight of **his brother Benjamin** (43:30). Third, **he wept** when **he** made **himself** known to **his brothers** (45:2). Fourth, **he wept** when **he** was reconciled with **his brothers** (45:15). Fifth, **he wept** at the sight of **his father Ya'akov** (46:29). Sixth, **he wept** at the death of **his father** (50:1). And last, **he wept** when **his brothers** questioned **his** love for **them** (50:15-17). **Joseph wept** more than anyone in the TaNaKh. **How all this reminds us of the tenderheartedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, as so often it was said of Him that He was moved with compassion (Matthew 9:36, 14:14, 18:27; and Mark 1:41, 6:34), and twice He wept; once at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35), and later over the holy city of Yerushalayim (Luke 19:41).**



72. Both Yosef and Yeshua reveal themselves to the children of Isra'el in an unmistakable way. No longer speaking through an interpreter, Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph!" Two words in Hebrew, and then he added: Is my father still living (45:3)? Judah's plea to **Joseph** had centered on the welfare of **Jacob**, and this had touched **his** heart. So **he** naturally asks about **him** again.⁶⁸⁵ Even though **they** were at first in shock that the ruler of **Egypt** spoke Hebrew, in a moment, **they** knew **his** true identity. **Christ will also reveal Himself in an unmistakable way. After the leadership of**

Isra'el invites him back (see my commentary on **Revelation Ev - The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**), **they will look upon Him, the One they had pierced (Zechariah 12:10b). They will see the wounds of His crucifixion, and be convinced that He is the Messiah.**

*Words fail to describe this scene. It is perhaps the most dramatic reunion in all of literature. It was here that the miracle nation of **the children of Isra'el** was established. It was the founding of a unique people to whom **God's** word and the **Messiah** would be given. That story continues in the book of **Exodus**.*

73. The children of Isra'el were, at first, troubled at the presence of both Joseph and Jesus. But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were stunned at his presence (45:3). The same is true for the children of Isra'el at the end of the Great Tribulation when they see the wounds of Jesus, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a first-born son (Zechariah 12:10c). At that time, the children of Isra'el will learn the extent of their sin in rejecting and crucifying their Messiah. They shall be troubled indeed.

74. Both Joseph and Jesus acted toward the children of Isra'el in marvelous grace. Then Yosef said to his brothers, *nagas*, meaning: Come close to me. It was an intimate closeness. The brothers' stunned silence indicated that they needed further convincing. So when they had drawn close to him he repeated his claim for the second time, saying: I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save your lives that God sent me ahead of you (45:4-5). This was information so personal and private that some members of their own family were unaware of it. **They** had carefully carried the secret of what **they** had done to **Yosef** for twenty-two years. Only **Joseph himself** could have known the horrible truth. Now **he** had spoken words **they** never expected to hear, and none of **his brothers** could deny the reality of that terrible crime so many years ago. This was **Yosef**, and there was no escaping that fact.⁶⁸⁶ **They** were **the ones** who had put **him** in a pit and sold **him** off to slavery. But when **they** meet again, **Yosef** had all of the power. What would **he** do? What would *you* do if you had all of that power and you gathered the eleven people on earth that had hurt **you** the most into one room? Bless them? **Yosef**, however, becomes the portrait of **God's** amazing grace. *What did he do?*

Joseph prepared a royal banquet for those who had hurt **him** the most. Grace is getting

from **God** what you don't deserve. Grace can calm the troubled sea of your soul. Grace can fill the barren desert of your life with living water. Grace can bring you through the fire. Grace is an ocean without a shoreline. Grace will set you free from the chains of your past. Have you failed in life? Have you made the wrong choices? Ask **the Lord** for forgiveness and experience **His** amazing grace. **His** grace is greater than all of your sin. Forgive yourself because **ADONAI** has buried it in the deepest sea. Don't poison the future with the pain of the past.⁶⁸⁷ **And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them (45:15a). So it will be when Isra'el is reconciled to Christ. On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, to cleanse them from sin and impurity (Zechariah 13:1). Then shall Messiah say to Isra'el: For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. In a surge of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you says ADONAI your Redeemer (see the commentary on Isaiah, to see link click Je - The Restoration of the Wife of the LORD).**

Jacob and **his** family could not have survived had **they** lived in the land of Palestine at that particular time. **They** would have perished because the famine was closer to its beginning than to its ending.⁶⁸⁸ **For two years now there has been a famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing or reaping (45:6).**

And **Yosef** announced prophetically: **But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance (45:7). Joseph** knew that the providence of **God** desired that **Isra'el** and **his** sons be preserved **in Egypt**. No doubt **Joseph** had consoled **himself** many times with this principle of faith.⁶⁸⁹

Continuing to speak in Hebrew, for the third time **he** said to **them**, **"So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God."** It is interesting that **Yosef** talks about **his** personal accomplishments last. **He** does not start with how important **he** is, the success **he** has achieved, or the honors that have come **his** way. Finally, **he** says: **He made me** prime minister to **Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt (45:8)**. This was no selfish display because **he** begins by divulging to **his brothers** why, in **his** analysis, **he** was in **Egypt** in the first place. **Joseph** talks more about **God** than about **himself**.⁶⁹⁰

75. The children of Isra'el went out and proclaimed the glories of both Yosef and Yeshua. Now hurry back to my father and say to him, "This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay" (45:9). In the same way, Isra'el, after being reconciled with Christ, will proclaim the glories of their King. ADONAI says: I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of

the believing remnant of Jews, those who survive the Great Tribulation, to evangelize the Gentile nations - to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians, to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of My fame or seen My glory. They will proclaim My glory among the nations (Isaiah 66:19).

You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me, you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have (45:10). Goshen was located in the eastern Nile delta region, which was the land bridge that connected the **Egypt** of Africa with the land of Canaan. This was near the city of Tanis, which was the capital of Hyksos rule. This would put them near **Joseph**, with territory suitable for grazing.

I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will literally be robbed of their possessions and become destitute. You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you (45:11-12). They stood there absolutely spellbound as **they** listened to **Joseph** speaking words that seemed unbelievable. And **they** would have been unbelievable, except that **Yosef** was right there before **them**.⁶⁹¹ Yes, this was certainly **Joseph**, and there was no getting around it.⁶⁹²

Even **Benjamin**, to whom all that must have been a complete surprise, could see and hear that it was really **Yosef**. **He** had been only a child when **Joseph** had supposedly been slain by a wild animal, so that **he** hardly remembered **him**, except for what **his father** had related to **him**. The experiences of that day would be very real in **his** mind for a long time, the shock of having **Joseph's** silver bowl found in **his** sack, the uncertainty as to the terrible fate that seemed **his**, Judah's impassioned defense and offer to substitute for **him**, and now suddenly finding that **his** older **brother** was alive and ruling **Egypt**! There had never been such a day in **his** entire life. Indeed **he** would tell **his father** all that **he** had seen and heard that day!⁶⁹³

Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly (45:13). They needed to get out of the land of Canaan. Now **Yosef** wanted **his father** to know that **he** was going **down** to life, not to death, to **Egypt**, not to the grave as **he** said in **42:38**.⁶⁹⁴

Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. They were reunited. And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. They were reconciled. Afterward his brothers talked with him (45:14-15). Did **Joseph** disown **his brothers** because **they** sinned against **him**? Did **he** replace **his brothers** with **his** Gentile bride when **they** came in? No **he** did not, and because **Yosef**

points us to **the Messiah**, neither will **He**. Therefore, replacement theology is entirely false. **God** has not replaced the Jewish people with the Gentile Church. **For ADONAI will not reject His people; He will never forsake His inheritance (Psalm 94:14; Isaiah 41:17, 42:16).**

Yosef was making peace with **his** past. **He** did not retaliate even though **his brothers** had sinned against **him**, even though, from a human perspective, **he** had every right to do so. **He** responded with compassion and forgiveness. **He** embraced **them** and loved **them**. How could **he** do that? How could **he** act against human nature? **He** truly believed in the sovereignty of **God**. **He** understood that **ADONAI** was working through all the painful events, and that **His** purposes were coming to pass. What an example of **Christ**-likeness! **Then Peter came up and said to him, "Rabbi, how often can my brother sin against me and I have to forgive him? As many as seven times?" "No, not seven times,"** answered Yeshua, **"but seventy times seven"** (Matthew 18:21-22 CJB). Dear friend, is there a person in your life whom you need to forgive? Or from whom you need to receive forgiveness? Take care of it now so that **Yeshua ha-Meshiach** may be honored. For how can we not forgive others when the **Christ** has forgiven us?