

Genesis 45

Verses 1-3

Then Joseph could not control himself in front of everyone standing before him, and he shouted, “Have everyone leave me!” So there was no one with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² Then he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *about it*. ³ And Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were terrified in his presence.

Have everyone leave me

Joseph wanted privacy because of his emotional state.

And the household of Pharaoh heard *about it*

The Egyptian officials standing outside heard the weeping and reported it to the house of Pharaoh

I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?”

Joseph had already been told two times that Jacob was alive

So why did he ask this question now?

People often say things that don't make a lot of sense when they are in an extreme emotional state of mind

But his brothers could not answer him, for they were terrified in his presence.

Ten of his brothers were in a state of shock and could not speak

The brother they had hated and sold as a slave, was alive and 2nd in command only to the king of Egypt

Benjamin had received his dead brother back and was also speechless

Verses 4-8

⁴ 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 to Egypt. ⁵ Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save lives. ⁶ 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. ⁷ So God sent me ahead of you to ensure for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. ⁸ 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.

Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here

Joseph wanted the men to forgive themselves

Yes, they had sinned but God had turned that sin into good for them and many others

Wait a second here, doesn't the bible also teach “you shall reap what you sow”?

Yes it does! And they did reap what they had sown

The men had lived with that guilt for 25 years

Isn't that enough punishment?

For God sent me ahead of you to save lives

God can work out everything for our good

See Romans 8:28

Yes, we sin and suffer the consequences, but in the long run, He makes it benefit us

This is the great advantage to being God's children

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

See chart 4505

Chp	Person	Event	Age	Year
37	Joseph	Sold to Ishmaelites	17	1728
40	Joseph	Cupbearer and Baker	28	1717
35	Isaac	Isaac dies	180	1716
41	Joseph	Pharaoh's dream	30	1715
41	Joseph	Years of plenty	31-37	1714 - 1708
41	Joseph	Manasseh and Ephraim born	31-37	1714 - 1708
41	Joseph	Years of famine	38-44	1707 - 1701
45	Joseph	5 years of famine left	40	1705
46	Benjamin	5 years of famine left	33	1705
47	Jacob	5 years of famine left	131	1705
49	Jacob	Jacob dies	147	1689
50	Joseph	Joseph dies	110	1635

Joseph is 40 years old and the year is 1705 BC

So God sent me ahead of you to ensure for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance

Mankind has no clue what God has done or is doing unless He reveals it to us

This is why God has given us his word

But if God is doing things to benefit mankind, why does God allow suffering?

And God has even revealed that to us in his word

1. God created sentient beings with Free Will

If He then prohibited mankind from doing any evil, so that people would not suffer, mankind would no longer have free will.

2. God allows evil to continue because he is giving every person “time” to repent of their evil acts and ways before they are judged.

See 2 Peter 3:9

There is much more that could and needs to be said about suffering, but we will do that in the Book of Job and Ecclesiastes because it is the major theme of those books

Verses 9-11

⁹ Hurry and go up 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, do not delay. ¹⁰ For you shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your grandchildren, and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. ¹¹ There I will also 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.

For you shall live in the land of Goshen

Goshen is in northeastern Egypt

See Map 4510



It is called the land of Rameses

Possibly because Rameses was the leading city of the area

Goshen was an area of 900 square miles

It is still spoken of as the best pasture land in Egypt

See Map 4515



There I will also 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.

This worldwide famine was already a treat to many after 2 years

But there were 5 more years to come and even though Jacob was a rich man, he and his family would have become poverty-stricken before it ended.

Joseph was in a position that he could give his family the best environment to live in during the famine

It is true that Joseph had suffered some injustice, and his brothers had suffered the consequences of their sin but God turned all of this into a great blessing.

But we should remember this took many years, about 25, to come about

There were several other very important benefits of living in Egypt

1. Since the Egyptians detested shepherds there would be little chance of Jacob's posterity forming marriages with pagans, as had already begun to happen in the case of Judah.
2. They would also have the protective arm of a powerful government which would secure them against hostile attack.
3. Under these conditions, they would grow into a mighty nation

Verses 12-15

¹² Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. ¹³ Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.” ¹⁴ Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.

Then he fell on his Brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵ He kissed all his brothers and wept on them

These are tears of joy

Joseph had been separated from his family for 25 years

How long do you think it took Joseph to forgive them?

Verses 16-20

¹⁶ Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh’s house that Joseph’s brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. ¹⁷ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: load your livestock and go to the land of Canaan, ¹⁸ and take your father and your households and come to me; and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.’ ¹⁹ Now you are ordered, ‘Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. ²⁰ And do not concern yourselves with your property, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’”

¹⁶ Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house

The word got to the king quickly that Joseph's brothers had come and he was pleased

Take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land

Jacob and all the children of Israel would go down to Egypt

Now you are ordered, do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt

The king gave an invitation to Joseph's family to live in Egypt

But the offer of wagons to transport the family was put in the form of a command

This is the first mention of wagons in the Bible

These were two-wheeled carts suitable for a flat country like Egypt

Verses 21-23

²¹ Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. ²² To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of silver* and five changes of garments. ²³ And to his father he sent the following: ten male donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and sustenance for his father on the journey.

To all of them he gave each man changes of cloths; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of cloths

Joseph showed favoritism to Benjamin like his father had done to him

Seeing that it caused hatred and suffering to all of those concerned, this does not seem like a wise thing to do

It's true that his brothers had learned their lesson, but it still seems unwise

What do you think?

Verses 24-28

²⁴ So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, “Do not quarrel on the journey.” ²⁵ Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan, to their father Jacob. ²⁶ And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” But he was stunned, for he did not believe them. ²⁷ When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, then the spirit of their father Jacob revived. ²⁸ Then Israel said, “It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, “Do not quarrel on the journey.

Life is full of ifs and buts

See Genesis 42:22

And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” But he was stunned, for he did not believe them.

Jacob had convinced himself that his favorite son was dead

This belief became more believable than the truth

When he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, then the spirit of their father Jacob revived

Jacob needed some physical proof that his son was still alive

Much like Thomas who would not believe until he put his finger in Jesus side

Then Israel said, “It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

It is interesting that during the last 9 years, 7 good years and 2 bad years, when Joseph was in total control of Egypt, that he never tried to contact his father

Do you think that happened by chance?