

## **The Triumph of Grace**

### **Genesis 45**

**Intro:** King Charles is about to be crowned, but Megan Markle isn't coming to the coronation. Have you taken a position?

We live in a broken world. Who hasn't experienced some sort of family conflict?

We are only four chapters into Genesis before Cain murdered Abel.

Even in the royal family of Israel (Jacob is a Prince), there is needed reconciliation.

In the last chapters, Joseph has tested his brothers to see if they are "honest" men. Have they changed since they sold him into slavery?

In one of the great surprises of the Joseph story, Judah turns out to be the most Christ-like figure of Joseph's brothers, offering himself as a substitute for Benjamin.

*Revelation 5:5 - "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."*

He is the poster boy for repentance and God's sanctifying grace. Indeed, we learn from this chapter that hope is always a valid thought because even in a broken world, God's grace trumps sin.

*Romans 5: - Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.*

Gen 42:24 – Joseph turned away and wept

Gen 43:30 – When Joseph saw Benjamin, he hurried out of the room and cried

Now, in Gen 45:2, witnessing the transformation of Judah, he cannot control his emotions.

### **First: The Revelation 1-3**

V 3 - *And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph!"*

What a moment this is. It's something we all knew was coming and couldn't wait to see. But Joseph's brothers aren't so happy.

V 3b – 'dismayed' = Psalm 2:5 - *Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury*

This is a foretaste of what will happen when many Israelites realize that Jesus was the Messiah.

Acts 2:36-37 - *Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."*<sup>37</sup> *Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*

### **Second: The Story 4-9**

#### a) The Demonstration of Forgiveness

Joseph could have been bitter. The writer of Hebrews warns us about this -

Hebrews 12:15 - *See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;*

But Joseph was not bitter because God had blessed him in his sorrow.

Genesis 41:51-42 - *Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house."*<sup>52</sup> *The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."*

Joseph's Godward focus kept him from bitterness.

#### a) The Source of Forgiveness 5 & 7-9

- 5 – *God sent me before you to preserve life*
- 7 – *God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors – (Noahic)*
- 8 – *So it was not you who sent me here, but God*
- 9 – *God has made me lord of all Egypt – Gen 1:26 – 'dominion'*

Joseph can see the purpose of his suffering. We often do not.

We, by faith, have to claim Romans 8:28 - *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

You may say, "How fortunate that Joseph could see the end of his suffering." Yes, but we have an advantage over Joseph. We live on this side of the cross, knowing, not by faith, but by sight, the good that God gains in the cross.

### **Third: The Preservation 7**

In Gen 12, God promised Abraham a seed that would bless all nations. In Gen 15, he told him that seed would be like the stars or sand, innumerable. But the actual record of Scripture often shows us how small that hope became.

V 7 – *Isaiah 10:19 - The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down.*

Throughout Genesis, one of the greatest obstacles to reconciliation has been God's own people.

- Cain and Abel
- Abraham and Lot
- Isaac and Ishmael
- Jacob and Esau
- Joseph and his brothers

But in this case, both Judah and Joseph are the anti-Cains. They are their brother's keeper (Gen 4:9)

Instead of Cain killing Abel or Jacob stealing from Esau, Joseph saves his brothers.

This is where God has been going since Eden.

IMP: In Eden, instead of blaming Eve, Adam should have offered himself as the substitute for Eve's sin. We see this in Judah and we long for an ultimate substitute throughout the OT. Why? So that all things might be reconciled to God. It has always been God's plan to live amongst his people.

*Genesis 3:8-9 - And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"*

Revelation 21:3 - *And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place<sup>(a)</sup> of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people,<sup>(b)</sup> and God himself will be with them as their God.*

#### **Fourth: The Provision 9-14**

9 – *Come down to me*

10 – *You shall be near me*

11 – *I will provide for you*

Exodus 19:1-6 - *On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. <sup>2</sup> They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, <sup>3</sup> while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: <sup>4</sup> 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; <sup>6</sup> and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*

The whole of the OT, from Genesis to Malachi, has this constant theme of God preparing a place – the Garden – and then a people – for himself, among whom he could live.

All the OT story makes Jesus's words in John 14 a bit anti-climatic but consistent with the OT -

John 14:1-3 - *Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*

#### **Fifth: Pharaoh's Response 16-23**

V 18 - *I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you shall eat the fat of the land.*

**Thought:** Gen 3:17 - *cursed is the ground because of you;*

Joseph, like Christ, has renewed the earth.

Isiah 65:17 - *For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth*

Isaiah 66:22 - *For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain.*

2 Peter 3:12-13 – *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! <sup>13</sup> But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

Revelation 21:1 – *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away*

(Two Greek words for new:

- Neo = new in time
- Kainos = new in quality = refurbished (2 Cor 5:17))

V 20 - *Have no concern for your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.*

This is a preview of *Philippians 4:19 - And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*

V 22a – They stripped Joseph, but he clothes them. He re-robed the brothers who disrobed him.

22b – He has enriched those who tried to enrich themselves but could not keep themselves alive.

Genesis 3:21 - *And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.*

*Isiah 61:10 - I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,*

**APPLICATION:** *Romans 13:14 - But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.*

V 23 – They thought his sale enriched them, but he enriches them

IMP: V 24 – Then he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, “Do not quarrel on the way.”

**APPLICATION:** *“If I can forgive you, you can forgive each other”*

Ephesians 4:29-32 - *Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

V 26 - You're asking Jacob to believe in a resurrection

Matthew 28:1-8 - *Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” <sup>8</sup> So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.*

Just as Abraham received Isaac back from the dead, now Jacob receives Joseph back from the dead.

They both prefigure Jesus's resurrection back from the dead.

### **Sixth The Brothers' Return 25-28**

- a) The Announcement – 26a
- b) Jacob's Response – 26b
- c) The Sufficiency – 28

There is more to be said about this than can be said, but the daily devotion reflects on it.

Every concern about eternity is settled when we remember that Heaven is Christ. Like Israel coming out of Egypt and into the Promised Land, it is really about knowing God.

**Conclusion:** This is the triumph of grace. Here is -

- a) Grace that changed the sons of Israel
- b) Grace that resurrected a brother
- c) Grace that reconciled a family

### Community Groups

- 1 – What have you most enjoyed about the Joseph story?
- 2 – What has been most meaningful to you about the Joseph story?
- 3 – How is Judah a type of Jesus?
- 4 – Why were Joseph's brothers dismayed to know he was alive?
- 5 – What kept Joseph from bitterness? (Read vs 5, 7-9)
- 6 – How does the cross give us an advantage over Joseph?
- 7 – How do we see God preserving Israel through all of this?
- 8 – How are Judah and Joseph anti-Cains?
- 9 – What does Joseph promise his brothers in vs 9-14?
- 10 – How can John 14:1-3 be considered anti-climatic?
- 11 – How does Pharaoh's response prefigure what God is doing with the earth?
- 12 – How does it prefigure God's care of us? (Phil 4:19)
- 13 - How does Ro 13:14 fit into the Joseph story?
- 14 – Why does Joseph tell his brothers not to quarrel, and what does that mean for us?

### Daily Devotion

**Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>** – Read Gen 3:12, 44:33 & Revelation 5:5. How is Judah a type of Christ? What does it mean that Jesus is from the tribe of Judah? Instead of blaming Eve, Adam should have been willing to suffer the judgment for her sin, just as Judah and Jesus substitute themselves. Is your attitude toward the world more of judgment or sacrifice? What steps can you take to become more sacrificial? Who has God placed in your life for you to demonstrate this Christ likeness? How will you do that today, this week?

**Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>** – Read Gen 45:1-5, 7-9, Acts 2:36-37, Ro 8:28 & Eph 4:29-32. What is the godly reaction to knowing we have offended God? Instead of anger, God, like Joseph, greets us with tears. What kept Joseph from bitterness and enabled him to forgive his brothers? Has God forgiven you? Have you not forgiven someone? What does unforgiveness reveal about your focus? Can you believe that God is working out your hurt for your good? How might this change your attitude toward someone who has hurt you? Memorize Eph 4:32 and ask the Holy Spirit to

make it real in your life. Then consider those who hurt you as God's means to Christ likeness for you.

**Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>.** Read Gen 3:17; 45:16-20; Is 65:17, 66:22, 2 Ptr 3:12-13; Rev 21:1 & 2 Cor 5:17. Considering Gen 3:17, how does the 'best' of Egypt prefigure the new heavens and the new earth? Remember that God is renewing you, just as he is renewing the earth. Think about your testimony and recount the changes that have occurred in you since you became a Christian. How are you reflecting the supernatural power of God to 'change' people like Judah and the sons of Israel? Perhaps today is a good day for reflection and to see where your life does not reflect Christ likeness, to repent of it, and ask the Holy Spirit to genuinely renew your attitude or behaviors.

**Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.** Read Gen 3:21; Is 61:10; Gen 45:21-23, Ro 13:14. Joseph's brothers sincerely thought that selling him would enrich them and solve their problems, but they ended up in a famine both spiritually and materially? Have you ever 'sold out' Jesus? What was the result? What does it mean to 'put on' Christ? How are you doing this daily? What specific areas of your life lack Christ likeness? What Bible verses can you read, memorize, and apply when you are tempted to sin (be unlike Jesus) and 'put on' Jesus through those verses?

**Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>.** Read Gen 45:25-28 & Mk 12:30. Jacob was unconcerned with Pharaoh's promises and Joseph's gifts. Instead, he said, "*It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive.*" How does choosing sin say, "*Jesus is not enough.*" Why do you think Jesus is not enough in moments of temptation? What do you see in Joseph that makes you love Jesus? How does the Joseph story help you love Jesus more? How might reflecting on who Jesus is and what he has done for you, help you love him? Think on specific examples and then ask the Holy Spirit to give you a whole-hearted love for Jesus.