

June 7th, 2020
The Salvation of Israel
Genesis 43-45

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

May 31 Esther 6-10	June 4 Job 11-13
June 1 Job 1-4	June 5 Job 14-16
June 2 Job 5-7	June 6 Job 17-20
June 3 Job 8-10	June 7 Job 21-23

Lesson Introduction: *Our lesson this week finds Jacob's brothers making the trek back to Egypt, as food supplies had once again run out. As we study these chapters, we will see how God brings about salvation for His people in an incredible way. We will see how God brings about repentance that leads to action, how He orchestrates all things according to His purposes, and how he preserves His people.*

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS:

- **True repentance leads to godly conduct (43:9, 44:17-44, 2 Corinthians 7:8-11)**
- **The Lord works all things according to His purposes (45:4-9)**
- **The Lord preserves His people (45:5-7)**

Read Genesis 43-45**Discussion Section 1: A Change of Heart (43:9, 44:17-44)**

-In what ways do we see Joseph's brothers deviate from their previously sinful ways?

-What is the significance of Judah being the one to offer to stand in Benjamin's place (43:9, 44:33)?

What is the difference between worldly sorrow and Godly sorrow? (2 Corinthians 7:8-11)

Note: *Last week we saw how Joseph had tested his brothers to see what the condition of their hearts was. They clearly remembered their past and believed that they were being punished by God for the way they had treated their brother so many years before (41:22-23, 28). As we study our passage this week, we see that there indeed had been a change of heart. In the past, the brothers had heartlessly sold Joseph into slavery, but in*

our passage this week, we see them have compassion on their father, and their youngest brother Benjamin, by acting sacrificially in order to bring him back to Jacob.

If you remember, in chapter 37:26-27, it was Judah who made the suggestion to sell Joseph into slavery. What a heartless thing for a brother to do. Clearly Judah's heart was hard toward Joseph, and he could not stand to deal with the favoritism that Joseph received from their father Jacob. Fast forward to our passage today, and we see a different Judah. While he was once quick to cast off his brother, he is now quick to sacrifice himself so that Benjamin can return to Jacob (43:9, 44:33). It does not seem that Judah has changed based on the fact that his father no longer showed favoritism, as it seems clear from our passage that Jacob was still favoring Benjamin, the son of his old age that Rachel had given him. Judah had clearly had a heart change. There was obviously guilt and grief that he dealt with from his decision to sell Joseph off into slavery, and that grief and guilt had led to a change of heart. Judah had gone from a man that once hated his favored brother to the point of wanting to sell him into slavery, to now being willing to sacrifice himself for the good of his brother.

This is what true repentance looks like. When we come to a place where we recognize our sin, it often grieves us, but genuine repentance takes us beyond sorrow and to change. 2 Corinthians 7:10 tells us that, "godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death." As we consider our past failures, it is important for us to consider what our grief over our failures has led us to. Have you recognized the error of your ways and turned to God for salvation and begun living for Him by faith, or are you simply staying in your grief until you die, with no true repentance that leads to salvation? As you consider this lesson, think about your sins of the past. Are you walking in defeat based on those sins, or has salvation without regret been produced in you through godly repentance, that you might live a life indicative of the salvation that has been purchased for you?

Discussion Section 2: God's Purposes in our Pain (45:5-7)

-Who does Joseph attribute all that had happened to him to?

-What does this passage teach us about God's purposes, and the way He accomplishes them?

-How might the truths about God's sovereignty in this passage be a comfort to you?

Note: *We have seen it time and time again throughout the book of Genesis, and especially as we have studied the story of Joseph, but chapter 45 displays God's providence over all circumstances as clearly as any passage in the Bible. When Joseph has finally revealed himself to his brothers, he makes an incredible comment about how all these circumstances came about, which had to be shocking for his brothers to hear. In verses 5-8, Joseph says, "And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt."*

Joseph was so sure of the providence of God in his life that he did not even seem to resent his brothers for their sinful actions against him because he recognized that God had a plan through it all. He says that it was God, not his brothers, that sent him to Egypt! As we have covered in the past, this does not mean that God made the brothers sin, or that their actions were not sinful (James 1:13-15). But what it does mean is that there is nothing that happens on this planet that God is not over, and that He does not ultimately use for the good of those who love him and are called according to His purpose (Ephesians 1:7, Romans 8:28).

Joseph's statement that it was God who sent him to Egypt should be a great comfort to us as believers. What hardships have you been facing recently? Have you stopped to consider that it is God Who has you there, and that He has a good purpose for you? The schemes of man against you, the illness you face, the frustrating relationship that you are dealing with, it is not man that has brought you into those circumstances, but God. No sparrow falls apart from Him, and He has ordained your every step (Matthew 10:29, Proverbs 16:9). As you consider the difficulties of your life, take time to praise God that He has brought you to them, and that He has grand plans to do His will for your life through them.

Discussion Section 3: God Preserves His People (45:5-7)

-What was the stated purpose of Joseph coming to Egypt? (45:7)

-In what way does God's preservation of Israel play a part in our salvation?

-How does God continue to preserve His people today?

Note: *As our passage closes it is important to highlight why it was that God brought Joseph to Egypt in the first place. 45:5 tells us that God send Joseph to "preserve life," and V. 7 says that it was to preserve a remnant and, "keep alive many survivors." God had Joseph right where He wanted him, so that through him He could preserve His people. God had promised Abraham many years before that He would make him into a great nation who would bless all other nations (Genesis 12:3), and in the story of Joseph we see God remaining true to that promise. Not only was God keeping the line of Abraham alive, but He was also keeping the line of Jesus alive. He orchestrated all the events of this incredible story, not just so Israel would be preserved, but so the Author and Perfecter of our faith could come from that line to bring salvation to all nations!*

Just as God preserved His people then, He preserves us now. Without Him, we have no hope of securing our salvation, but He is keeping us by the power of His Spirit (Philippians 1:6, Jude 24-25, Hebrews 12:1-2, John 10:28-29, 1 Peter 1:5). As we consider our salvation may we rejoice that it is not ultimately up to us to make or keep ourselves holy, but it is by the grace of God that we are preserved daily. He has promised to keep us, as His remnant, forever! How wonderful it is that He worked on our behalf to preserve the line of Christ through Joseph, and that continues to work on our behalf to present us spotless before His throne through Christ and His Holy Spirit!