

Introduction

Last week we covered Genesis 44. Joseph had his steward plant his silver cup in Benjamin's sack, and then chase them down once they were out of town. He brought them back and Benjamin is faced with becoming a slave to this ruler over Egypt. Judah made a plea on Benjamin's behalf. He spoke about how much Benjamin meant to his father and how they were told that they could not see this ruler's face unless their youngest brother came with them. He said that if anything happened to this youngest son, the father would be overwhelmed and would go to his grave in sorrow. Judah plead to become a slave in place of his brother. I mentioned several things that are important in making appeals. First, we must come with the right heart. We must be humble. We must be submissive. We must be respectful. We must also give a reasonable request. We are all going to have to make appeals from time to time, and it is good to know how to make them.

When we got home from church last week, Chad went to the computer to finish a report that he thought was due at midnight. Unfortunately he saw that the deadline was 12:00 noon, not 12:00 midnight. Any final report not turned in on time would get a zero. Chad was disheartened and came to tell me. I told him that we just talked about making an appeal in the message today. I urged him to finish the report, turn it in, and give a letter of appeal with it. Chad left my room and he then told Karen about what had happened. Karen, not knowing what I had just counseled him, gave Chad the same counsel that I had given. She told him to write the report and turn it in with an appeal. So, Chad went back to work, finished his final report for the class and submitted it with an appeal. The next day Chad came to tell me that the teacher accepted his appeal, graded his paper and gave him a 96 on it, which gave him an A for the class. The appeal had been successful.

In our text today, we get the response from Judah's appeal. Joseph is overwhelmed by it and loses control. He weeps so loud that Pharaoh's house next door hear him weeping. Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. Then, he reveals his brothers to Pharaoh. Finally, Joseph sends his brothers back to reveal to their father that he was alive and to come to Egypt. The message is about Joseph being revealed.

Joseph Reveals Himself

1. Joseph Reveals Himself To His Brothers (Gen 45:1-15)
2. Joseph Reveals His Family To Pharaoh (Gen 45:16-20)
3. Joseph Reveals That He Is Alive To Jacob (Gen 45:21-28)

1. Joseph Reveals Himself To His Brothers (Gen 45:1-15)

(Gen 45:1-15) "Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, "Have everyone go out from me." So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. {2} He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *of it*. {3} Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. {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 into Egypt. {5} "Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. {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} "God sent me before

you to preserve for you a remnant in 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. {9} "Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, "Thus says your son Joseph, "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. {10} "You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children 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." {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} He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him."

In Genesis 43, we saw that Joseph went to his bedroom, wept, washed his face and then came out and controlled himself. (Genesis 43:30-31) Self-control is a fruit of the spirit. Self-control comes from setting our minds on things above, and not on the flesh. Self-control can also come through personal discipline. I have found that self-control can also be achieved by staying focused on the work or task at hand, rather than getting caught up in the emotions of what is going on. Joseph maintained self-control. But our passage today starts with Joseph not being able to control himself. This is not a strike against Joseph. He is not in the flesh. This does not mean that his heart is set on the wrong things. He has just been overwhelmed by what is going on. Judah's moving appeal about not causing their old father to grieve with sorrow over the loss of both of his sons and causing his gray hair to go down to Sheol in sorrow is more than Joseph can bear. His emotions are overwhelmed and he loses control before all those before him. He cried and then ordered everyone but his brothers to leave the room. Then, he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, as well as the household of Pharaoh. He had seventeen years of pent-up emotions that just erupted.

Then, when it is just Joseph and his brothers in the room, he revealed his identity to them, saying, "I am Joseph!" He has been speaking with the help of a translator all this time, and now he speaks directly to his brothers in perfect Hebrew. Immediately after telling them that it is Joseph, he asks if his father is still alive.

Joseph has been overwhelmed, but his brothers are in shock. It says that his brothers could not answer him for they were dismayed at his presence. The Hebrew word is *bahal* (Strong's H926) and it is used 39 times. About half of the time it is translated as terrified and half the time as dismayed. The KJV says that they were troubled at his presence. The NIV says that they were terrified. The Amplified Bible says that they were distressingly disturbed and dismayed. The dictionary gives these synonyms for dismayed: appalled, horrified, shocked, shaken up; taken aback, confounded, surprised, startled, alarmed, frightened, scared, daunted, unnerved, unsettled, thrown off balance, discomposd, upset. I believe that almost all these words describe how his brothers were feeling. They have been carrying this guilt around for seventeen years. They thought that they would never see their brother again. They thought they were done with him. They hated him and thought that their plan of getting rid of them was a forever thing. Now, their brother has in his power and authority to do whatever he wants to them. If he wanted to return evil to them for their actions, he could certainly do it. They were distressingly disturbed and dismayed and could not talk.

Then, Joseph tells them to come closer. He tells them again that he is their brother Joseph, whom they sold into Egypt. That would just cause them to be more terrified. But, Joseph follows that up with words of comfort, saying, “Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.” This should have put his brothers to ease. Joseph’s statement to them indicates that he is fully healed of the offense. He has had seventeen years to get over it. He has faithfully served God at Potiphar’s house, in the prison, and now as Pharaoh’s representative. God has been with him and favored him everywhere. Joseph sees things from God’s perspective, not from his own perspective. He has seen God’s purpose in all of it. He has remembered the dreams that God gave him and he has seen those fulfilled. Joseph has obviously forgiven his brothers, and he has been made whole and healthy. Therefore, he can offer these words of comfort to those that have wronged him. For us to minister forgiveness and comfort to others, we need to be walking in forgiveness and comfort ourselves. In Second Corinthians, Paul starts his letter by talking about comfort. He blesses God for being the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. Then he said that God comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those are in any affliction with the comfort which we ourselves are comforted by God. Joseph is able to comfort his brothers because he has been comforted and healed himself.

(2 Cor 1:3-4) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, {4} who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

So far the conversation has been one way. He told them he was Joseph. He asked about their father. He told them to come closer. He told them again that he was Joseph whom they sold into slavery. He told them not to be grieved or angry. They were dismayed and could not speak, and Joseph does all the speaking.

Then, Joseph tells them of what lies ahead. He said the famine has been two years and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing or harvesting. He also tells them that God sent him before them to preserve for them a remnant in the earth. He said that it was God that sent him there, and it was not really them. He said that God made him a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt. This should have comforted his brothers and given them some assurance that Joseph was not out to harm them. It should have conveyed that he had no malice, bitterness or anger towards them.

Next, Joseph tells them to hurry and go to their father and tell him to come to Egypt, where God has made him lord of all Egypt. He tells them that they shall live in the land of Goshen, where they will be near him. He tells them that he will provide for them for the next five years.

Apparently his brothers are still in disbelief and shock because Joseph then said, “Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you.” The rest of his facial looks, like his hair and beard, are probably different. But, there is something about his mouth that they could recognize. There is no response recorded, and Joseph continues. He tells them to tell their father of his splendor in Egypt and all that they have seen. Then, he tells them that they must hurry and bring their father back. There is still no recorded response.

Next, Joseph fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. Then, he kissed all of his brothers and wept on them. These are kisses of affection. There is no malice or bitterness. Then, the brothers finally talked with him. It has been all one-way communication until he kissed them and wept on them. His affection towards them got them over their dismay and shock.

Do you know what breaks down barriers between people? It is the love of Christ that breaks down walls and barriers. Love is the key to reaching people. Jesus said in John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Love is the greatest witness in evangelism. It is also the perfect bond of unity. It bonds people. Paul wrote in Colossians 3:14, "Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity." The love that Joseph has shown towards his brothers has bonded them together.

2. Joseph Reveals His Family To Pharaoh (Gen 45:16-20)

(Gen 45:16-20) "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 beasts 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} 'Do not concern yourselves with your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

Joseph has revealed his identity to his brothers. In the process, he wept so loudly that Pharaoh's household heard it. After he revealed himself to his brothers, it did not take long for that news to get to Pharaoh. When Pharaoh heard the news, it pleased him and his servants. Joseph had a good working relationship with Pharaoh and his staff, and if his brothers are anything like him, they are happy to have them around. Pharaoh told Joseph to tell his brothers to go to the land of Canaan and bring their father and households to Egypt. He promises to give them the best of the land of Egypt, and they can eat the fat of the land. The fat of the land implies the very best of the land.

In Genesis 4:4 Abel brought his firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. The fat portions were the very best of his flocks. We should give God our first fruits and our very best. Abel honored God, and that is what we want to do. Pharaoh said they could eat the fat of the land, which was the very best that they had.

Pharaoh then orders Joseph to take wagons from the land of Egypt for their little ones and their wives and to bring their father to Egypt. This was not a suggestion; it was an order. Pharaoh repeats his promise about the fat of the land. This time he says that the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.

I want to keep in front of us the dream that Abraham had in Genesis 15:12-14. God told him that his descendants would be strangers in a land that is not theirs where they will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. God has been arranging and orchestrating the events to get Abraham's descendants to Egypt. He sent Joseph ahead of the rest of the family, and now all the brothers and Jacob are going to come to Egypt.

Notice that God said that they would be enslaved and oppressed. Many times the things that will enslave us and oppress us look good. Pharaoh was going to give them the best of the land, the fat of the land. It will not be long before that promise is long forgotten, and what looked like a good thing is going to be bondage to them. Sin looks very attractive, but it brings people into bondage.

3. Joseph Reveals That He Is Alive To Jacob (Gen 45:21-28)

(Gen 45:21-28) “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} To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey. {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} 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, 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.”

Joseph’s brothers did exactly what Pharaoh ordered them to do. Joseph gave them wagons and provisions for their journey. He also gave them changes of garments, but he gave Benjamin three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. He sent twenty donkeys to his father. Ten female donkeys were loaded with grain and food, and ten donkeys were loaded with the best things of Egypt.

So they departed and went towards home, but not before Joseph gave them an exhortation. He said, “Do not quarrel on the journey.” We don’t have any indication of why he told them not to quarrel. Joseph grew up with his brothers and knew how they interacted with one another. He had also watched them on their first trip and on this second trip. He could have been addressing some behavior issues that he had observed. He could also have been addressing the fact that their sin of selling Joseph as a slave was going to be revealed to their father, and they might quarrel over who gets the blame. Joseph may have been addressing the fact that they might quarrel over the gifts from Egypt. People will often quarrel over the smallest matters.

The Bible has a lot to say about quarreling. In Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, he called them men of flesh and infants who needed milk, not solid food. He said that since there was jealousy and strife, they are fleshly. Being quarrelsome is a sign of immaturity. On the other hand, one of the requirements for pastors is that they not be pugnacious or quarrelsome (1 Timothy 3:3). The Greek word literally means a striker. Pastors are to be examples to the flock and should not be quarrelsome. Pastors are supposed to be mature men of God. In 2 Timothy 2:23-24, Paul tells us that the Lord’s bond-servants must not be quarrelsome, but kind to all. He also tells us some of the causes. Foolish and ignorant speculations are one source of quarrels.

(1 Cor 1:11) “For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's *people*, that there are quarrels among you....{3:1} And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. {2} I gave you milk to drink, not solid

food; for you were not yet able *to receive it*. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, {3} for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?"

(1 Tim 3:3) "not addicted to wine or pugnacious (plektes), but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money." (NIV says, "not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.")

(2 Tim 2:23-24) "But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. {24} The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,"

It is important to know and identify the various sources of quarrels so that we can avoid them. Solomon said the beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out. In order to abandon it before it breaks out, you have to know the sources of quarrels and alertly abandon them before they break out.

(Pr 17:14) "The beginning of strife is like letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out."

In James 4:1-2, he talks about the source of quarrels and conflicts. He said it is our pleasures that wage war in our members. He mentions lust and envy.

(James 4:1-2) "What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? {2} You lust and do not have; *so* you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; *so* you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask."

Solomon said a lot about contention and strife. In Proverbs 26:21, he said that contentious people stir up strife. In Proverbs 28:25 he said that an arrogant man stirs up strife. In Proverbs 15:1 he said that harsh words stir up anger. Therefore, we need to learn to give gentle answers and be gracious in our speech. In Proverbs 22:10, he said that scoffers stir up strife. In Proverbs 23:29, he said that those that drink alcohol stir up strife. In Proverbs 26:20, he said that whisperers cause strife. Therefore, we need to avoid or deal with these situations and people to avoid strife.

(Pr 28:25) "An arrogant man stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will prosper."

After Joseph exhorts them not to quarrel on the journey, they left and arrived home in the land of Canaan. They told Jacob that Joseph is still alive and is the ruler over all the land of Egypt. The brothers were shocked or stunned in Egypt when Joseph revealed himself to them. Now Jacob is stunned when his sons told him that Joseph was alive, and he did not believe them. Then, they showed him all the wagons that Joseph had them carry to him, and the spirit of their father revived. He said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Conclusion and Applications

Our message today is about revealing yourself. Joseph revealed his real identity to his brothers. Next, we saw that Joseph's brothers were revealed to Pharaoh. Finally, the fact that Joseph was still alive and was the ruler over Egypt was revealed to Jacob. Jacob went from unbelief to belief.

Words alone did not convince him. He wanted to see evidence. Joseph provided the evidence by sending twenty donkey loads of the best products of Egypt.

Here are some applications that we can take from our text today. First, have we revealed our true identity to our family? Do our brothers and sisters know that we are sons of God? Do our parents and children know that we are servants of God? Do the Pharaohs in our lives, the bosses and people we work for, know that we are Christians? Do the servants of Pharaoh, our co-workers, know that we are born-again Christians? Have we revealed ourselves to the people in our lives?

When our identity is revealed, are people in disbelief and stunned? Joseph told them to look at his mouth. Joseph sent his father evidence that he was alive. Do we provide people with the evidence that they are looking for to bring them from a place of unbelief to belief. The Bible has a lot to say about the evidence we are to provide. In John 13:35 Jesus said that by our love for one another all men will know that we are His disciples. Love is the best evidence that we can provide unbelievers. In 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 we find that prophetic ministry is another way that unbelievers are shown evidence. In Matthew 5:14-16 we are called the light of the world. Jesus told us to let our light shine before men in such a way that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. There are lots of ways that we can reveal God to people around us. Are we revealing ourselves and are we providing evidence. Let's pray.

(John 13:35) "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

(1 Cor 14:24-25) "But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; {25} the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you."

(Matt 5:14-16) "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; {15} nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. {16} Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Introduction

- 1. Joseph Reveals Himself To His Brothers** (Gen 45:1-15, Gen 43:30-31, 2 Cor 1:3-4, John 13:34-35, Col 3:14)
- 2. Joseph Reveals His Family To Pharaoh** (Gen 45:16-20, Gen 4:4, Gen 15:12-14)
- 3. Joseph Reveals That He Is Alive To Jacob** (Gen 45:21-28, 1 Cor 1:11, 1 Tim 3:3, 2 Tim 2:23-24, Pr 17:14, James 4:1-2, Pr 26:21, 28:25, 15:1, 22:10, 23:29, 26:20, 28:25)

Conclusion and Applications (John 13:35, 1 Cor 14:24-25, Matt 5:14-16)