

Genesis Part II (Chapters 25-50)

Lesson 9: Joseph Reunited with his Family

Reading: Genesis 45:1-47:31

In chapter 42, with the famine having reached Canaan, Jacob sends his 10 sons to Egypt to buy food, while keeping Benjamin at home. When Joseph's brothers appear before him, they bow down fulfilling the dreams he had in Canaan. Joseph recognizes his brothers, but they do not recognize him. He accuses them of being spies, and in the course of defending themselves, they are required to prove their words by returning to Canaan and bringing Benjamin back with them. Simeon is held captive in exchange for the brothers' return with Benjamin. Joseph sends them back to Canaan with grain and their money returned in each of their sacks. During the event, Joseph's brothers believe these events are punishment by God for their treatment of Joseph. They return to Canaan and tell Jacob of the demands, but Jacob refuses to let Benjamin leave. Jacob finally relents and allows Benjamin to go to Egypt because they are out of food and Judah offers himself as surety for Benjamin's safety. When Joseph's brothers return to Egypt with Benjamin, they are invited to dine with Joseph, and Simeon is released. During the interactions with his brothers, Joseph finds a private place to weep. Joseph sends them back to Canaan with grain, their money returned in their sacks, and his silver cup in Benjamin's sack. He then sends his servant to catch up with them and accuse them of taking his silver cup. The brothers vow death to the one who has the cup, with the other brothers becoming slaves. When the silver cup is found in Benjamin's sack, they return to Egypt and appear before Joseph. When Joseph demands that Benjamin must stay as his slave and the other brothers can leave, Judah makes an impassioned plea on behalf of Benjamin and tells Joseph that if he does not personally return with Benjamin, then Jacob will die. Judah's defense establishes the scene where Joseph will reveal his true identity to his brothers.

Joseph reveals himself to his brothers (45:1-15)

1. When Joseph reveals himself to his brothers, what is his first concern, and what instructions does he give to them (45:3-13)?

Joseph's provisions for his brothers (45:16-24)

2. What provisions did Joseph give to his brothers for their journey, and what instruction does he give them before their return to Canaan (45:21-24)?

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Joseph's brothers return to Canaan (45:25-28)

Jacob's journey to Egypt (46:1-27)

3. What promises does God give Jacob in a dream at Beersheba (46:2-4)?

Jacob settles in Goshen (46:28-34)

4. How does Joseph prepare his father and brothers for their appearance before Pharaoh (46:31-34)?

5. Why would the Egyptians consider shepherds to be an abomination?

Jacob and his family appear before Pharaoh (47:1-12)

6. How does Jacob describe his life when appearing before Pharaoh? How does his life match the description? (47:7-10)

Joseph leads during the famine (47:13-26)

7. How does Joseph enrich Pharaoh during the 7 years of famine, and how does this famine change Egypt's economy (47:13-26)?

Joseph's vow to Jacob (47:27-31)

8. What vow does Joseph make to Jacob (47:29-31)?