

Family Reunion

GENESIS 44–45

FIRST DAY: Introduction

God desires to reveal Himself to us, save us, provide for us, and bless us! However, He is unable to do this for us as long as our sin nature continues to dominate our thoughts and actions. God, in His grace, allows us to see the ugliness of our sin and repent. He often validates His redemptive work in us by testings to prove that our desires and heart have been changed. As we respond to His conviction, He begins to reveal Himself to us, that He might work His great goodness in and through our lives.

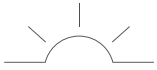
In a similar way, before Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers, he tested them. Joseph recognized that God had placed him in a powerful position in order *to preserve a posterity ... in the earth and to save ... by a great deliverance*. However, before Joseph could save his family, he had to verify that these men had truly changed. Genesis 44 records Joseph's final test and the repentant state of his brothers. What follows then in Genesis 45 is the great reveal.

Have you been tested by God? It is only because He wants to remove the dominating factor of sin from your life and bring His blessings in its stead.

Ask God to purify your heart that He might reveal Himself to you.

SECOND DAY: Read Genesis 44:1–14

1. As Joseph and his brothers enjoyed a meal at his home, Joseph arranged one final test using his brothers' relationship with Benjamin, the favored son. Use Genesis 44:1–14 to note and comment on:
 - a. The set up (verses 1–2)



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Genesis 40:8 and 41:16, 25 make it clear that Joseph credited God alone with divining powers. However, as part of a ruse to test his brothers, Joseph used a *cup of divination* as a prop.

- b. The execution (verses 3–6)
- c. The protest of innocence (verses 7–8)
- d. The verdict (verses 9–10)
- e. The search and discovery (verses 11–12)
- f. The reaction (verses 13–14)

(1) Tearing *their clothes* signified deep distress. Why was their grief significant in this situation?

2. Contrast the demeanor of Joseph's brothers with their earlier conduct in Genesis 37:23–25a. What changes do you see in these men?
 - a. Why do you think it was necessary for Joseph to test his brothers?

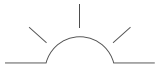
THIRD DAY: Read Genesis 44:15–34

1. When Joseph's silver cup was found in Benjamin's possession, *Judah and his brothers* went back to Joseph's house and *fell before him* (Genesis 44:14). What did Joseph say to them? Genesis 44:15
 - a. This was the third time Joseph's brothers bowed before him. Link this with Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:7 and share your thoughts.

2. According to Genesis 44:16 (NLT), Judah responded, *Oh, my lord, what can we say to you? How can we explain this? How can we prove our innocence? God is punishing us for our sins. My lord, we have all returned to be your slaves—all of us, not just our brother who had your cup in his sack.* What do you find remarkable about this response?

3. This was a critical moment for Joseph to assess whether his brothers cared more for Benjamin than for themselves. From Genesis 44:17 remark on how he tested them.

4. Judah responded with a heartfelt plea on behalf of Benjamin. Use Genesis 44:18–34 to note and comment on the following from Judah's speech:
 - a. Judah's humility (verse 18)



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

This is the longest recorded speech of any of Jacob's sons. It contains 218 Hebrew words. In this address, twelve times Judah referred to himself and his brothers as *your servants*.

- b. Judah's explanation (verses 19–29)
- c. Judah's concern (verses 30–31, 34)
- d. Judah's promise (verse 32)
- e. Judah's offer (verse 33)

(1) What does this speech suggest to you about Judah?

5. It is interesting that Jesus Christ came from the tribe of Judah. What Christlike qualities do you see in the example of Judah? See also John 15:13 and 1 John 3:16.

FOURTH DAY: Read Genesis 45:1–15

1. Upon hearing Judah's intercession for his brother Benjamin, Joseph *could not restrain himself* any longer and finally revealed his true identity. Use Genesis 45:1–4 to capture the drama of this great reveal:

- a. The emotion (verses 1–2)
 - b. The revelation (verses 3a, 4)
 - c. The reaction (verse 3b)
- (1) Recall that in many ways Joseph is a picture of Jesus. With this in mind, observe that Joseph's brothers were *dismayed in his presence*. Link this reaction with the prophecy concerning Jesus in Zechariah 12:10 and note any parallels you see.
2. Seeing his brothers' dismay, Joseph reassured them. From Genesis 45:5–8 note and remark on what Joseph explained to them about:
 - a. Their grief and anger at themselves (verse 5)
 - b. The *famine* (verses 6–7)
 - c. His position in Egypt (verse 8)

(1) Use Genesis 45:5, 7 to identify God’s purposes in the things that had happened in Joseph’s life:

(a) *for God sent me before you to _____
_____.*

(b) *And God sent me before you to _____
_____ for you in the earth,*

(c) *and to _____
by a great deliverance.*

(2) What does this reveal about Joseph’s perspective?

3. After reassuring his brothers, Joseph instructed them on what to do in light of the *famine*. Use Genesis 45:9–13 to answer the following questions:

a. What did Joseph instruct concerning his *father*? (verses 9, 13)

b. What was Joseph’s plan to *provide* for them? (verses 10–11)

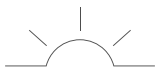
c. What did Joseph reassure them of? (verse 12)

- (1) Why do you think Joseph exhorted them to *hurry* with all these arrangements?

4. Remark on the picture of reconciliation recorded in Genesis 45:14–15.
 - a. In verse 15 (NLT), Joseph's brothers *began talking freely with him*. Contrast this with Genesis 37:4b. What do you see?

5. Three times Joseph pointed out that God had *sent* him to Egypt for a purpose. Share a brief testimony of God's purpose in your life that was worked out through difficult circumstances.

6. Write a specific way that Joseph is an example to you.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Pharaoh's instruction to Joseph showed the prominence, respect, and favor Joseph had in Egypt.

FIFTH DAY: Read Genesis 45:16–28

1. The *report* of the arrival of Joseph's brothers reached *Pharaoh and his servants*. How did they react to this news? Genesis 45:16

a. What did Pharaoh tell Joseph to do? Genesis 45:17–20

(1) How do you see God working on behalf of Jacob's family?

2. The *sons of Israel* did as Pharaoh instructed (Genesis 45:21a). List the things Joseph *gave* them for their *journey*. Genesis 45:21b–23

a. What do you note about Joseph's favoritism toward Benjamin?

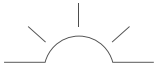
3. As his brothers *departed* for Canaan, Joseph counseled them not to *become troubled along the way* (Genesis 45:24). Why do you think he said this?

4. Joseph's brothers left Egypt and *came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father* (Genesis 45:25). What did they announce to Jacob? Genesis 45:26a
 - a. For a moment, place yourself in Jacob's position. What had he been led to believe about Joseph? Genesis 37:33
 - (1) How had he felt? Genesis 37:35

 - b. Describe Jacob's initial reaction from Genesis 45:26b.
 - (1) Why do you think he reacted this way?

 - c. What convinced Jacob that his sons were telling the truth? Genesis 45:27

5. What does Jacob's statement convey about his attitude? Genesis 45:28



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In Genesis 45:28
Jacob is called *Israel*
for the first time since
his name was changed
by God (Genesis 35:10).

- a. Recall that at one point Jacob declared, *All these things are against me* (Genesis 42:36b). What do you think he was beginning to realize?

- (1) What divine truths about God do you need to realize in your life?

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. Our Great Creator is always working for our good. Use the following events from our lesson this week to note His activity in:

- a. The brothers' testing

- b. Joseph's hardships

c. The famine

d. Joseph's position in Egypt

2. How does this week's lesson inspire you concerning Our Great Creator's work in the events of your life?