

Connecting The Dots Between God's Control & Our Conduct

A Series Of Studies About Joseph's Life (Genesis 37–50)

Moving Forward As We Seek God's Glory & His Goal For Us:

Recognizing God's Providence, Provisions, & Presence

Genesis 45:16–46:7; Romans 8; Philippians 1–4; Genesis 15

—**A summary to introduce today's message:** Everything in this portion of the narrative describing Jacob's family has a positive twist. Joseph has determined that his brothers attitudes & actions have changed; they have been reunited with one another; Pharaoh offered to bring Joseph's family to Egypt & provide for them during the rest of the famine; Jacob's faith was revived by the reality that Joseph was alive and doing very well! With this, Joseph's childhood dreams were being fulfilled: *Jacob's family would now live together in Egypt under the leadership of Joseph. The lessons included in this are an extraordinary example of how God's plans & purposes work together for the good of His people! If God is for us, who is against us?*

—**Some biblical truths that provide some necessary perspective:**

- 1} God promised that Abraham's family would become a great nation!
- 2} *God prophesied that Abraham's family would live in a foreign land!*
- 3} Jacob's family became too comfortable with the Canaanites.
- 4} *Jacob's words when he sent his sons back to Egypt: "Take your brother and arise, return to the man; may God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of the man, so that he will release your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." = Jacob was bitter toward everyone, even God!*
- 5} Joseph's brothers showed evidence of repentance & changed hearts!
Repentance makes reconciliation possible!
- 6} *Joseph revealed his true identity to his brothers & requested them to go to Canaan to bring their father to Egypt. They were speechless & every spoken word in 45:1–13 was from Joseph to his brothers!*
- 7} Once his brothers knew that Joseph loved & forgave them, they spoke.
- 8} *Even though Joseph spoke to his brothers with deep emotion, grace, forgiveness, hope, & encouragement, he didn't ignore their sin. He saw that they had recognized the depth of their sin & he noted that God had "sent him to Egypt to save lives" from the famine.*
- 9} Meanwhile, Jacob was back in Canaan anxiously waiting to see if his "other son" & Benjamin would return home safely!

① God demonstrated His _____ & _____ by _____ Pharaoh to _____ for Joseph's family to move to Egypt! {45:16–20}

② Joseph gave _____ for his entire family & but also showed _____ to Benjamin. But this didn't seem to _____ any anger or jealousy. He gave them _____ instructions, warning them to keep the _____. {45:21–24}

③ When the brothers arrived home, they told their father that Joseph was the _____ of Egypt, Jacob was so _____ by this, he didn't think it was _____. But when he saw all that was sent for him, his _____ became _____. God came to him in a vision & _____. His _____. {45:25–46:7}

—PERSONAL REFLECTIONS & APPLICATIONS
THAT ENCOURAGE OUR FAITH

—1— There's a _____ illustrated in this lesson
that we all need to believe and take to heart!

God is _____ in the lives of those who _____
_____. —Philippians 1:6

—2— There's a _____ at the heart of this lesson
that requires us to trust in His authority & perfect timing!

God has _____ !
—Philippians 4:6-7, 13, 19

—3— There's a _____ at the heart of this lesson
that requires us to submit to His authority!

If God is for us, _____ ?
—Romans 8:1, 28, 31-39

Some Relevant Quotes & Discussion Questions to Help us Dig Deeper

—“Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace.” —Jerry Bridges

—“There is a mystery in how God's providence shapes the choices of human agents, but the lesson is that God fulfills His purposes according to His Word.” —Warren W. Wiersbe

—“There isn't any way that we can use the providence of God as a scheme to excuse our sinful or evil actions. God didn't *design* it to work that way.” —GAD

— “God's providence is His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His own glory and the good of His people.”
—Erwin Lutzer

Please carefully read Genesis 44–46 to prepare for our study questions. This week we'll be taking an observant look at God's providence (His constant care & absolute authority working for what's best for those of us who are His faithful followers).

—1— For 22 years, Joseph lived with memories of what his brothers had done to him. In Genesis 39–50, it seems as if Joseph *moved forward* thru forgiveness without being hindered by emotional pain. Once he saw his brothers, he didn't seek revenge & he tested them to see if they had changed. How would you describe or define the difference between forgiveness & reconciliation? How does repentance (a change of heart) fit into this? How does God's Spiritual authority fit into this process?

—2— Jacob had a bitter attitude after *losing* Joseph & his grief became more intense when he feared losing Benjamin. After he found out that Joseph was alive, his discouragement lifted and on the way to Egypt, he stopped in Beersheba to offer a sacrifice to God. God spoke to him to affirm His presence & the promises made to Abraham. Why is it beneficial to know what God has promised to His faithful followers?

—3— Thru Pharaoh, God blessed Jacob's family with abundant provision. The famine was going to continue for 5 more years. Is it wrong for us to enjoy God's rich blessings in a world where there are so many needs? What thoughts do you have about this based on Scripture?

—4— Please observe the applications given in these sermon notes & also what Paul said about God's provisions for us in Philippians 4 & Romans 8. Take some time to either reflect on this personally or discuss with someone about what it means that *God is for us*?