

# Joseph Made Himself Known to His Brothers

## 45: 1-15

**DIG:** Why was Joseph able to freely forgive his brothers for what they had done to him? Are his brothers convinced of his forgiveness (see 50:15-21)? Why or why not? As Yosef reveals himself and who he really was, how did he also make God known for who He is, has been, and will be? Based on Joseph's story how would you define *divine providence*? What **five** ways did **Joseph foreshadow the life of Christ**?

**REFLECT:** When in your life have you enjoyed *divine providence*? What is the one thing you have learned from Yosef's story that would be most helpful to share with someone experiencing tough times? Is there a person in your life that needs your forgiveness? Or is there a person that you need to ask to be forgiven?

Joseph was approaching his fortieth birthday. He was the prime minister of **Egypt** and had worldwide power. He had wealth that staggered the mind. He had a royal chariot pulled by matching stallions, and wherever he went people would bow before him. His fame had reached around the world. He had a mansion of breathtaking beauty. He had a beautiful wife and two handsome sons, and a wonderfully close relationship with **God**. But his dream had not come true. He was separated from his brothers and his aged father **Jacob**, whom he loved dearly. He had everything but a reunion with his family.

No longer could there be any doubt in Yosef's mind that his brothers were completely changed men. He had subjected them to the most severe tests, and they had passed with flying colors. The testing itself had been a means of spiritual growth for them; they were more conscious than ever of the leading of **God** and their responsibility to Him. They were more aware than they had ever been of their own unworthiness and of **God's** mercy. Finally, their troubles had brought them all closer together, and now they were of one mind, loving one another and their father, as they had never done before.

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" What he was about to say would have been inappropriate for anyone outside the family to hear. So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his eleven brothers (45:1). Even though the servants may not have understood what he was doing, he was so forceful, they obeyed nonetheless. And when he was left alone with his brothers, he cried out to them that he was their brother Yosef, the one they thought was dead.<sup>684</sup>

**71. Both Joseph and Jesus were men of compassion.** And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard him (45:2). Seven times we read of Joseph weeping. First, he wept as he listened to his brothers confessing their sin (42:24). Second, he wept at the sight of his brother Benjamin (43:30). Third, he wept when he made himself known to his brothers (45:2). Fourth, he wept when he was reconciled with his brothers (45:15). Fifth, he wept at the sight of his father Ya'akov (46:29). Sixth, he wept at the death of his father (50:1). And last, he wept when his brothers questioned his love for them (50:15-17). Joseph wept more than anyone in the TaNaKh. **How all this reminds us of the tenderheartedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, as so often it was said of Him that He was moved with compassion (Matthew 9:36, 14:14, 18:27; and Mark 1:41, 6:34), and twice He wept; once at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35), and later over the holy city of Yerushalayim (Luke 19:41).**

**72. Both Yosef and Yeshua reveal themselves to the children of Isra'el in an unmistakable way.** No longer speaking through an interpreter, Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph!" **Two words in Hebrew, and then he added: Is my father still living (45:3)?** Judah's plea to Joseph had centered on the welfare of Jacob, and this had touched his heart. So he naturally asks about him again.<sup>685</sup> Even though they were at first in shock that the ruler of Egypt spoke Hebrew, in a moment, they knew his true identity. **Christ will also reveal Himself in an unmistakable way. After the leadership of Isra'el invites him back (Isaiah 52:12 to 53:1), they will look upon Him, the One they had pierced (Zechariah 12:10b). They will see the wounds of His crucifixion, and be convinced that He is the Messiah.**

*Words fail to describe this scene. It is perhaps the most dramatic reunion in all of literature. It was here that the miracle nation of the children of Isra'el was established. It was the founding of a unique people to whom God's word and the Messiah would be given. That story continues in the book of Exodus.*

**73. The children of Isra'el were, at first, troubled at the presence of both Joseph and Jesus.** But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were stunned at his presence (45:3). **The same is true for the children of Isra'el at the end of the Great Tribulation when they see the wounds of Jesus, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a first-born son (Zechariah 12:10c). At that time, the children of Isra'el will learn the extent of their sin in rejecting and crucifying their Messiah. They shall be troubled indeed.**

**74. Both Joseph and Jesus acted toward the children of Isra'el in marvelous grace.** Then Yosef said to his brothers, *nagas*, meaning: Come close to me. **It was an intimate closeness. The brothers' stunned silence indicated that they needed further convincing. So when they had drawn close to him he repeated his claim for the second time, saying:**

I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save **your** lives that God sent me ahead of you (45:4-5). This was information so personal and private that some members of their own family were unaware of it. **They** had carefully carried the secret of what **they** had done to **Yosef** for twenty-two years. Only **Joseph himself** could have known the horrible truth. Now **he** had spoken words **they** never expected to hear, and none of **his brothers** could deny the reality of that terrible crime so many years ago. This was **Yosef**, and there was no escaping that fact.<sup>686</sup> **They** were **the ones** who had put **him** in a pit and sold **him** off to slavery. But when **they** meet again, **Yosef** had all of the power. What would **he** do? What would **you** do if you had all of that power and you gathered the eleven people on earth that had hurt **you** the most into one room? Bless them? **Yosef**, however, becomes the portrait of **God's** amazing grace. *What did he do?*

**Joseph** prepared a royal banquet for those who had hurt **him** the most. Grace is getting from **God** what you don't deserve. Grace can calm the troubled sea of your soul. Grace can fill the barren desert of your life with living water. Grace can bring you through the fire. Grace is an ocean without a shoreline. Grace will set you free from the chains of your past. Have you failed in life? Have you made the wrong choices? Ask **the Lord** for forgiveness and experience **His** amazing grace. **His** grace is greater than all of your sin. Forgive yourself because **ADONAI** has buried it in the deepest sea. Don't poison the future with the pain of the past.<sup>687</sup> **And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them (45:15a). So it will be when Isra'el is reconciled to Christ.** On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, to cleanse them from sin and impurity (Zechariah 13:1). **Then shall Messiah say to Isra'el:** For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. In a surge of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you says **ADONAI** your Redeemer (Isaiah 54:7-8).

**Jacob** and his family could not have survived had **they** lived in the land of Palestine at that particular time. **They** would have perished because the famine was closer to its beginning than to its ending.<sup>688</sup> **For two years now there has been a famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing or reaping (45:6).**

And **Yosef** announced prophetically: **But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance (45:7).** Joseph knew that the providence of **God** desired that **Isra'el** and his sons be preserved in **Egypt**. No doubt **Joseph** had consoled **himself** many times with this principle of faith.<sup>689</sup>

Continuing to speak in Hebrew, for the third time **he** said to **them**, "**So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God.**" It is interesting that **Yosef** talks about his personal accomplishments last. **He** does not start with how important **he** is, the success **he** has

achieved, or the honors that have come his way. Finally, he says: **He made me** prime minister to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt (45:8). This was no selfish display because he begins by divulging to his brothers why, in his analysis, he was in Egypt in the first place. Joseph talks more about God than about himself.<sup>690</sup>

**75. The children of Isra'el went out and proclaimed the glories of both Yosef and Yeshua.** Now hurry back to my father and say to him, "This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay" (45:9). **In the same way, Isra'el, after being reconciled with Christ, will proclaim the glories of their King. ADONAI says:** I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of the believing remnant of Jews, those who survive the Great Tribulation, to evangelize the Gentile nations - to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians, to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of My fame or seen My glory. They will proclaim My glory among the nations (Isaiah 66:19).

You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me, you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have (45:10). Goshen was located in the eastern Nile delta region, which was the land bridge that connected the Egypt of Africa with the land of Canaan. This was near the city of Tanis, which was the capital of Hyksos rule. This would put them near Joseph, with territory suitable for grazing.

I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will *literally be robbed of their possessions and become destitute*. You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you (45:11-12). They stood there absolutely spellbound as they listened to Joseph speaking words that seemed unbelievable. And they would have been unbelievable, except that Yosef was right there before them.<sup>691</sup> Yes, this was certainly Joseph, and there was no getting around it.<sup>692</sup>

Even Benjamin, to whom all that must have been a complete surprise, could see and hear that it was really Yosef. He had been only a child when Joseph had supposedly been slain by a wild animal, so that he hardly remembered him, except for what his father had related to him. The experiences of that day would be very real in his mind for a long time, the shock of having Joseph's silver bowl found in his sack, the uncertainty as to the terrible fate that seemed his, Judah's impassioned defense and offer to substitute for him, and now suddenly finding that his older brother was alive and ruling Egypt! There had never been such a day in his entire life. Indeed he would tell his father all that he had seen and heard that day!<sup>693</sup>

Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly (45:13). They needed to get out of the land of Canaan. Now Yosef wanted his father to know that he was going down to life, not to death, to Egypt, not to the grave as he said in 42:38.<sup>694</sup>

Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. They were reunited. And he kissed *all his brothers* and wept over them. They were reconciled. Afterward his brothers talked with him (45:14-15). Did Joseph disown his brothers because they sinned against him? Did he replace his brothers with his Gentile bride when they came in? No he did not, and because Yosef points us to the Messiah, neither will He. Therefore, replacement theology is entirely false. God has not replaced the Jewish people with the Gentile Church. For ADONAI will not reject His people; He will never forsake His inheritance (Psalm 94:14; Isaiah 41:17, 42:16).

Yosef was making peace with his past. He did not retaliate even though his brothers had sinned against him, even though, from a human perspective, he had every right to do so. He responded with compassion and forgiveness. He embraced them and loved them. How could he do that? How could he act against human nature? He truly believed in the sovereignty of God. He understood that ADONAI was working through all the painful events, and that His purposes were coming to pass. What an example of Christ-likeness! Then Peter came up and said to him, "Rabbi, how often can my brother sin against me and I have to forgive him? As many as seven times?" "No, not seven times," answered Yeshua, "but seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22 CJB). Dear friend, is there a person in your life whom you need to forgive? Or from whom you need to receive forgiveness? Take care of it now so that Yeshua ha-Meshiach may be honored. For how can we not forgive others when the Christ has forgiven us?