

JOSEPH- PROFILE OF COURAGE

Part 7: Courage to Forgive and Reconcile (Chs. 45-47)

INTRO: Raise your hand if you've ever been terribly wronged (even betrayed) by someone close to you. How did it end—or has it? Did you grant forgiveness? Were you able to find reconciliation? Looking back, how could you have better responded if you were convinced God was with you?

REVIEW: When left the story at end of Ch. 44 Joseph was meeting with the brothers for a second time, this time with Benjamin. Joseph has been testing them to see if they had changed hearts. Judah stepped up and is willing to take his brother's place. Quite a change from suggesting Joseph be sold and adulterous past—a new man (2 Cor. 5:21). What would Joseph do?

SERIES QUESTION: “How would your outlook on life change if you had the courage to really believe God was with you in every situation?” He could've got even, but he forgave, which is what God wanted him to do, plus seek family reconciliation which is always more difficult. Forgiveness vs. Reconciliation... God doesn't want us to only forgive but to pursue reconciliation when possible (Rom. 12:17-21). Forgiveness depends on me; reconciliation depends on *us*. Let's pick up in Ch. 45 ...

JOSEPH'S IDENTITY DISCLOSED (45:1-15)

- Confession of identity (vv.1-3)
- Recognition of sovereignty (vv.5-8) — Repetition of “you sold... God sent.” God has been at work all the time. He has been with us all along, accomplishing His plan, for our good and for his glory (Rom. 8:28). He didn't say “God allowed it, but God DID it!” Great words of comfort and reassurance.
- Invitation to family reunion (vv.9-13) Goshen (map)
- Reconciliation complete (v. 14-15) — Results? Peace protection, proximity as family, provisions for life. Just some of the possibilities when we practice a God-is-with-me life—nothing but lavished grace for the guilty and forgiven!

CELEBRATION—PHAROAH'S INSTRUCTIONS (45:16-28)

- Pharaoh's acceptance (vv.16-21) – He invites whole family!
- Joseph's provisions (vv. 22-24) – no quarreling

- Jacob's response (vv. 25-28) - Jacob almost has a heart attack!

JACOB'S JOURNEY FROM CANAAN TO EGYPT (46:1-7)

Jacob is 130 years old, Joseph is 39 and Benjamin about 23. God reassures Jacob He is with him (as God has done 5 times before). But this time Jacob takes initiative. He's come a long way. We all need reassurance God is with us at times.

JACOB'S DESCENDANTS (46:8-27a)

SETTLEMENT IN EGYPT (46:27b-34) – Joseph and Jacob reunite.

Reunion of Jacob and Joseph after 22 years. Now 17 years together. Jacob and about 66 family members migrate and settle in Egypt. Over 400 years later God birthed the nation Israel—more than 600,000 men plus women and children would be freed from Egyptian slavery and return to Canaan, the land God promised. (Exo. 1:1-4)

PROSPERITY IN GOSHEN (Ch. 47) – Read vv.27-31

LIFE LESSONS

1. *When possible (as far as you are able) offer forgiveness and seek reconciliation.* It's what God did for us (Rom. 5:6-11; 2 Cor. 5:18)
2. *The grace of God can restore whatever sin destroys.* His grace is greater than our sin (Rom. 5:20). If we are confident God is with us then we must believe God has a greater plan that can overrule their sin.
3. *God can and will provide additional comfort in our times of great need* (47:1-4). He is the God of all comfort. He indwells us with His comforter (John 14:16)
4. *Have the courage to trust God and His sovereign plan in every circumstance.* Never ever forget—He is with us and in us! He is at work, even when we can't see it.

SERIES QUESTION: “How would your outlook on life change if you had the courage to really believe God was with you in every situation?”

CONC: Touching story of forgiveness and reconciliation. Unfortunately, not always the case. More possible when we know and live a God-is-with-us life.