

# Genesis

**Memorize the TRUTH!**

Lesson 24  
Joseph Reveals His Identity  
Genesis 45–46

So then, it was not you who  
sent me here, but God.  
Genesis 45:8a

## Joseph Reveals Himself – Genesis 45:1-15

### Day 1

1. a. Why did Joseph finally reveal his identity to his brothers?  
  
b. How did they respond to his revelation?  
  
c. What thoughts must have flooded their minds at that moment?
2. What reason did Joseph use to reassure and extend forgiveness to his brothers? How many times did he repeat his reason/perspective?

## Learn the TRUTH!



Joseph is finally honored, exalted and bowed down to by all Egypt and his brothers. In the same way, Jesus will be honored, exalted and bowed down to when He returns in glory. We now have the choice of acknowledging His lordship and submitting to Him voluntarily. Choose today to honor and exalt Jesus as Lord.

## Joseph Demonstrates Love – Genesis 45:16-28

### Day 2

3. a. In what ways does Joseph demonstrate unconditional love and forgiveness to his brothers? Do they deserve it?  
  
b. How is this story an important lesson in your ability to forgive those who have hurt you?

Romans 5:8-9

Titus 3:4-5

**Joseph Sends Word Home**  
**Genesis 45:16-28**

**Day 3**

4. a. What does Pharaoh's reaction to the news of Joseph's reunion with his brothers say about his regard for Joseph?  
  
b. What did Joseph provide for his brothers' journey back to Canaan?  
  
c. What parting words of instruction did he have for them?
5. a. Considering Jacob's reaction in 45:25-28, what do you think it was like for Jacob to learn that his beloved son, whom he thought was dead, is alive?  
  
b. Do you think Joseph's brothers disclosed what they had done to him? Genesis 49:22-23

**Jacob Stops at Beersheba**  
**Genesis 46:1-4**

**Day 4**

6. Why did Jacob stop at Beersheba before he left Canaan for Egypt?
7. a. How did God reveal His will to Jacob that night?  
  
b. What message did He give Jacob at that time?  
  
c. What specific promises did He make?

**Israel's Journey to Egypt**  
**Genesis 46:5-34**

**Day 5**

8. Describe Jacob/Israel's reunion with Joseph.
9. a. What location had Joseph chosen for his family's new home?  
  
b. What was he counting on to ensure that Pharaoh would approve this choice?  
  
c. Why would it be important for this emerging nation to live apart from the Egyptians?
10. What are some of the ways in which Joseph's life parallels the life of Jesus Christ. Which of these is most meaningful to you today, and why?

**Live the TRUTH!**

**Not only did the Lord keep His promises to Jacob, but also to his forefathers, Abraham and Isaac. He promised their descendants would number as the stars in the sky and through them would come the Messiah. We know that God kept His promise. He preserved His chosen people as a distinctive nation. And God gave us His Son, Jesus. If He can keep His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He can certainly keep His promises to us! What promise do you need to hold on to today?**

## Commentary Genesis Lesson 24

Joseph asks everyone but his brothers to leave and begins to weep so uncontrollably that his entire household hears him. He reveals his identity to his brothers and again asks about his father's welfare. They are so stunned that they cannot speak. Who would ever imagine a story so unlikely? How could their brother rise to the leadership of an empire? Their inability to speak is due in part to their own guilt: They had done everything except kill him. The one they cruelly rejected now stands before them as a sovereign ruler with the power of life and death over them.

The brothers back away from Joseph, but he calls them near so he can calm their fears as well as keep the Egyptians from hearing what he is about to say. (Joseph was no doubt speaking to them for the first time in Hebrew.) He is the brother whom they had sold into slavery. Though he could justly destroy them all, that is not his intention. He is treating them with gentleness and grace. God has used their sin for good. Joseph's presence in Egypt and his unusual wisdom have worked together to save many lives. The famine that has already been so severe has five more years to run, but Egypt is ready. Heaven has used the unhappy events of 22 years ago to preserve the family of Israel.

The severity of the famine means that Jacob and the family must leave Canaan at once. Because Jacob is aged and lives in the land God has promised, he will be reluctant to move away. Joseph specifies exactly what the brothers are to say to their father. They are to explain Joseph's high position and vast authority and to give God all the credit. Joseph does not insist that the brothers reveal their own guilt in the matter, though they do so eventually. He has already made plans to settle them in the region of Goshen, one of the most fertile areas of the Nile delta. God has revealed that they won't be able to survive if they remain in Canaan. Joseph goes to great lengths to show affection to the brothers who mistreated him.

The lives of the 11 brothers change instantly and radically. Before this day, they were subject to slavery and death; now they have access to vast wealth and resources. Before this, they were distant from the source of authority and power; now their family member is associated with royalty. Their changed circumstances picture those of Christian believers, who, upon conversion, find themselves in a totally new situation.

Because of his affection for Joseph, the Pharaoh extends Egypt's finest hospitality to his family. The king himself will provide lavishly for their journey and for their return trip. They will enjoy the best Egypt can provide once they arrive. Joseph advises them not to quarrel along the way. The effect on Jacob is remarkable; his spirits are lifted, and he decides to make the long trip to Egypt. He must see Joseph before he dies. Perhaps at this point the brothers confess to their father their guilt in the disappearance of Joseph. The brothers must have longed to be free of keeping this guilty secret.

### ***Check It Out:***

How did Joseph attain this position of prominence and power? God put him there. He was orchestrating events and guiding not just Joseph, but all the people who surrounded him and who made decisions concerning him. Had the caravan not traveled the specific route it did, Joseph might have died in the pit where his brothers threw him. Potiphar could've ordered Joseph's execution, but he had mercy. If the cupbearer had remembered Joseph sooner, he might have been out of prison by the time Pharaoh had his dreams. Amazing, isn't it? God was writing the script, and things were happening exactly as they had to for Joseph to be in the right place at the right time to live out God's will for his life. When you feel like God has forgotten you and your life seems to be going nowhere, think about Joseph's story. Your life, too, is part of a larger plan. God is at work behind the scenes in your life, providentially preparing you for His purposes!

Years before, God had warned Isaac not to go down to Egypt. Now Israel is doing the very thing that God had warned his father against. This question is certainly on Jacob's mind as the caravan travels through Beersheba. This location had played an important role in the lives of Abraham and Isaac; Jacob builds an altar and worships there. God speaks to him in a vision and affirms that it is His plan for Jacob's family to move to Egypt, and his descendants will return at the proper time. The family of Israel that settles in Egypt is composed of 70 people. Four hundred years later almost 2 million descendants will emerge to travel to the Promised Land. The climax of Israel's trip occurs when Joseph rides out to meet him. The two enjoy a tender reunion after their separation of 20 years. Before Joseph leaves them in Goshen, he issues advice. Pharaoh will want to meet them and will ask about their occupation. They should confirm that they are shepherds. Because "all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians" (46:34), the Pharaoh will be happy to allow Israel's family to settle in Goshen. The territory is distant from any population center and is suitable for pastureland. By living apart from the Egyptians, the Israelites will be able to maintain their ethnic and spiritual identity, with few opportunities to worship pagan Egyptian deities.

Joseph's life anticipates Jesus' life in many ways. The New Testament stresses this point. There are probably more parallels showing Joseph as a "type" of Christ than any other man in the Old Testament: (1) both Jesus and Joseph were the long-awaited sons of their fathers. Rachel was barren for many years before God blessed her union with Jacob. God anticipated the birth of His Son before time was reckoned. Micah 5:2 states, "out of you [Bethlehem] will come for Me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."; (2) both held a special place in the father's heart; (3) both were predicted to be preeminent; (4) both were sent to their brothers with a message, but were rejected; (5) both were sold for silver; (6) both were sent away to a distant place; (7) both patiently accepted undeserved sufferings; (8) both proved their purity and integrity when tempted; (9) both were wondrously delivered from their afflictions and exalted to the right hand of authority; (10) both acquired a bride with pagan connections (the bride of Christ is the church, which has been predominantly Gentile for the last 2,000 years); (11) Joseph became a servant in Potiphar's household. Jesus came to serve; (12) Joseph was imprisoned with two offenders; he pronounced blessing on one, but judgment on the other. Jesus was condemned with two offenders. He also pronounced blessing on one, but judgment on the other. Many more parallels exist, but these demonstrate the craftsmanship of heaven in Joseph's experience.



**The silence of Moses, our author, about the men explaining to their father that Joseph was still alive reminds us that some things that happen in families are so private and personal that they are better left unshared. As for Jacob, it may be that he was able to see the hand of God in the circumstances and to forgive his sons for their cruelty and deceit. Trouble often brings us closer to God. It appears that Jacob was able to hear their confession, forgive their sin against him and their brother, and release the whole matter without dwelling on it. God tells us to do that — forgive and forget. What a help that is in mending broken relationships!**

**Unfortunately, we too often get our archaeological shovels and start digging up dirt from the past. If we have really forgiven, we will not keep bringing up hurtful things that should be forgotten. Then we are able to move into the future with joyful expectation rather than getting mired in the mud of unhappy memories from the past.**