

Genesis Ch45v16-Ch46v27 - Truth For The Journey

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[0 : 00] It's on page 51 of the Red Church Bibles. When the news reached Pharaoh's palace that Joseph's brothers had come, Pharaoh and all his officials were pleased.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, tell your brothers, do this, load your animals and return to the land of Canaan, and bring me, your father, and your families back to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you can enjoy the fat of the land.

You were also instructed to tell them, do this, take some carts from Egypt for your children and your wives, and get your father to come. Never mind about your belongings, because the best of all Egypt will be yours.

So the son of Israel did this. Joseph gave them carts, as Pharaoh had commanded. He also gave them provisions for their journey. To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave 300 shekels of silver and five sets of clothes.

And this is what he sent to his father, ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey.

[1 : 16] Then he sent his brothers away, and as they were leaving he said to them, don't quarrel on the way. So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan.

They told him, Joseph is still alive, in fact he is the ruler of all Egypt. Jacob was stunned, he did not believe them. But when they told him everything that Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts that Joseph has sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

And Israel said, I'm convinced my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die. So Israel set out with all that was his.

And when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, Jacob, Jacob, here I am, he replied.

I am God, the God of your father, he said. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again.

[2 : 29] And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes. Then Jacob left Beersheba, and Israel's sons took their father Jacob and their children and their wives in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to transport them.

So Jacob and all his offspring went to Egypt, taking with them their livestock and possessions that they had acquired in Canaan. Jacob brought with them to Egypt his sons and grandsons and his daughters and granddaughters and all his offspring.

Thank you, Louise.

So let's keep our Bibles open there at Genesis 45, 46, and you can follow along. Let's pray as we look at God's word.

Father, thank you for these great stories, these true accounts of your people who lived so long ago, but yet speak truth for us today.

[3 : 48] And so we ask for your help that we would be able to apply that truth to our lives, that it may change us and help us as we walk with you.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, it was an emotional moment. After years of division, lies, and heartache, finally, there's reconciliation and restoration.

Just look back, chapter 45, verse 4. 22 years had passed, and then Joseph said to his brothers, come close to me.

When they had done so, he said, I am your brother Joseph, the one you had sold into Egypt. Verse 14.

And Joseph threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept. And Benjamin embraced him weeping. And Joseph kissed all his brothers and wept over them.

[4 : 57] 22 years of shame and guilt had been confessed and forgiven. It was a turning point for the brothers. It was a fresh start and a new beginning.

And now as we continue on in the account, we discover that they're on their way to Egypt. And as we follow them on their journey, there are three things we're going to learn that will help us on our journey as we walk with God.

There's a warning, there's a reminder, and a guarantee. A warning, a reminder, and a guarantee. Three things we're going to follow on this journey.

So first, the warning, beware the sins of your fathers. Now, following the brothers' dramatic transformation came this unexpected invitation.

Verse 17. Pharaoh said to Joseph, tell your brothers, do this, load your animals and return to your home, to the land of Canaan, and bring your father and your families back to me, and I will give you the best of land in Egypt, and you can enjoy the fat of the land.

[6 : 18] All they would ever need is promised to them. They've gone from famine to fortune. They could hardly believe it. But old sins threatened to ruin it all.

You see, we've all got our weaknesses, haven't we? Our Achilles heel. For Jacob and his family, it was favoritism.

And it appears there was a history to it. Apparently, it all started with Jacob's parents, Isaac and Rebecca. They had two children, Esau, and the other one was Jacob.

And the story tells us in chapter 25 that Isaac loved Esau, but Rebecca loved Jacob.

Now, that's never good for family dynamics, is it, to have parents loving one more than the other? In fact, as we read on in the account, it set a pattern that practically divided and destroyed the family.

[7 : 28] Later on, we learn that Jacob married two women, Leah and Rachel. And once again, favoritism came through. The story tells us in chapter 29 that Jacob's love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah.

Favoritism. And this seeped through into the love for the children. Chapter 37, verse 3, tells us, now Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other's sons.

Favoritism. And the brothers hated him for it. They were filled with jealousy and envy and they sold him as a slave. That's what we've been looking at over the weeks.

But with Joseph gone, Jacob's favoritism jumped to Benjamin. So when the news came to Jacob that if the family were going to receive any more food from Egypt, they would have to send Benjamin down there.

And Jacob would adamant, have a look at chapter 42, just go back a couple of pages, chapter 42, verse 38. So the request has been to bring Benjamin down to Egypt.

[9 : 00] And Jacob said, my son will not go down there with you. His brother, thinking of Joseph, is dead. And he is the only one left.

Well, he wasn't the only one left, was he? Jacob had ten other sons, but of all the sons, it seems only one son mattered.

Generations torn apart by favoritism, envy, and jealousy. Now let's go back to chapter 45.

But all seems to be different now. The brothers had repented, they've been reconciled to Joseph, it's a new beginning, it's a fresh start, but sin once again raises its ugly head.

Did you notice it when we listened to the reading? Verse 21, Joseph gave them carts as Pharaoh had commanded, and he also gave them provisions for the journey.

[10 : 07] To each of them he gave new clothing. nothing. But to Benjamin, he gave 300 shekels of silver. Now that's enough to pay off his mortgage, buy himself a nice new car, and have money left over for a lovely holiday.

But not just that, five walk-in wardrobes. it seems that Joseph has got his own favourite.

And there was potential for further upset. Was envy and jealousy beginning to strike again? Look at verse 24. And Joseph sent his brothers away, and as they were leaving, he said to them, don't quarrel on the way.

It seems Joseph has his own favourites, and he knew the danger of favouritism. But it seems he's blind to his own behaviours.

The sins of our fathers are never too far away. Now favouritism mightn't be your issue. It could be stubbornness, or maybe it's control.

[11 : 28] Or maybe it's lies, or unforgiveness, or manipulation, or keeping a grudge.

And if you're not quite sure what your sin struggle is, well then ask your spouse or a close friend, because they'll know what it is, and they'll tell you. You see, we learn behaviours, don't we? We repeat patterns. that's why people say things like this, oh he's an old chip off, he's a chip off the old block. Or she's got her mother's ways.

We know what we mean when we say that. You see, God in his grace has given us so much and he's blessed us, not least with family and friends, but how often are those relationships broken and shattered, and remain broken and shattered because of pride and anger and stubbornness and favouritism.

Are we able to spot and recognise the sins that continue down through our family and in our own life? Of course, we have sins that are similar to Adam, our first father.

[12:53] sin of selfishness, living as we please and doing as we want. You see, we not only need to recognise our sin, we need to confront it and deal with it, admit to it, own up, confess it to God.

Because if we don't deal with our sin, it will come to the surface in divisive and destructive ways. just as it did in Jacob's family and as it seems to be arising once again with Joseph. So as we journey along, first, beware the sins of your fathers.

second, a reminder, remember the promises from our God.

Jacob's life has been filled with trouble and trials, primarily as we've just seen, by his own doing, especially the sin of favouritism. Yet God doesn't give up.

[14:04] he sticks with sinners. The brothers return home to their father, and it's not just with provisions and an invitation to go to Egypt, but with some great news.

Look at verse 26. The brothers told their father Jacob, Joseph is still alive. In fact, he's the ruler of all Egypt.

Jacob was stunned. He couldn't believe it. 22 years have passed. And when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph had sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

And Israel said, I'm convinced. My son Joseph is still alive. I will go. and see him before I die.

Now, the question we're all asking is, did the brothers tell their father what they did to Joseph? Do you think they did?

[15:19] Well, we're not told, are we? We're not told what they told their father. It appears that that particular piece of information is an important, important.

If it really was important, it would be recorded for us, but it's not. Instead, we're told of something else that is more important, and this is where our focus should be.

we don't get an answer, we do get a promise. Look at chapter 46 verse 2. God's name.

And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, Jacob, Jacob, here I am, he replied.

I am God, the God of your father, he said. God's calling out to Jacob in a vision is specific and intentional.

[16:20] God is introducing himself to Jacob as the covenant God, the God who makes promises and keeps promises. I am God, the God of your father, he said.

this is the commitment that God gives. He is the one who makes promises and keeps promises.

And to enable Jacob to trust God, he gives another promise.

Look at verse 4. Or sorry, verse 3, we'll take it up in verse 3. I am God, the God of your father, he said. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation.

And now here comes another promise. I will go down to Egypt with you and I will surely bring you back again.

That's the commitment of God. That's his loyalty. He proves his promises by his presence. Verse 4, I will go with you.

[17:29] I will bring you back. I will do it. you see, if we have the presence of God with us, then we're on solid ground.

We don't need to fear and we don't need to worry. That's the confidence the writer of Psalm 46 has. Read along with me.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. God is the end of the earth.

God is the end of the heart of the sea. Did you see the solid ground we have there? Do you see the promise? Get your highlighter out, your pen, scribble, mark, ever present.

Ever present. It's a guarantee. It's a promise. Our God is the ever present God. He doesn't leave us. He never forsakes us.

[18 : 38] You see, this isn't just a nice sentiment that we text to our friends without any thought. Oh, God is with you. We just palm it off.

No, this is a truth that provides security and stability. I will go with you. You see, it doesn't matter whether we're travelling down to Egypt like the brothers or having to go and visit the doctor over some concern or we're starting into a new job.

Yes, we will have fears and worries, but we are not alone. The Creator God, the Almighty God, the covenant God who makes promises is ever present.

I will be with you. Yes, he is with people like you and me who mess up and sin just like Jacob did, but he sticks with us.

So first, beware of the sins of our fathers and remember the promises of our God and third, here's the guarantee, recall the assurances for our life, recall the assurance for our lives.

[20 : 09] So with the promises of God given to Jacob, his family pack up and they head for Egypt, verse 7.

Jacob brought with him to Egypt his sons and grandsons and his daughters and granddaughters and all his offspring. Now, that's enough information, isn't it?

Isn't that all we need to know? Jacob and his family headed off down to Egypt. But what we get is another catalogue of one of those genealogies, those boring details, like how many of us start reading verse 8, these are the names of the sons of Israel, Jacob and his descendants who went to Egypt, Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob, the sons of Reuben, Hanok, Palu, Hezron, Carmi.

Do you want me to keep going? Do we really need to know everybody's name? I mean, the writer could have just saved a lot of research and time and just stopped at verse 7 and jump all the way to verse 28 where the story continues.

So why have we got all this list of names? Does he just like names? Has he got a particular hobby?

[21 : 40] No, it's much deeper and richer than that. But this list of names reveals to us God's faithfulness or to be more accurate God's assurances to his people in times of great failure.

look with me at this list of names. They're recorded or broken up into four groups.

So starting in verse 8 we have a list of names of sons and then come to verse 15 and we're told these are the sons of Leah born to Jacob.

And then we have a list of other sons. And we get to verse 18 and we're told these are the children born to Jacob by Zilpah.

And then we've got more names. And then verse 22 these were the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob. And then a few more and in verse 25 these are the sons born to Jacob by Bilhah.

[22 : 52] What's going on? why all these kind of references to their mothers? Well Leah was Jacob's first wife.

And remember we learned this just now. Jacob didn't love Leah. He loved Rachel. And it sparked off a baby war. Who could get the most babies out of Jacob?

And when they couldn't have more babies they got their maidservants involved. Zilpah and Bilhah. It sparked was all sparked off by favoritism which led to envy and rivalry.

One family but here they are divided and broken in four. You see that's what favoritism does.

That's what sin does. It wrecks and it destroys. They are a family that have been broken up. But yet here they are all listed, all named, all recorded.

[23 : 57] Not one of them is missing. They're all accounted for. Why? Because God had made a promise that he was going to make this ragamuffin bunch of failures into a great nation so that they in turn could go and be a blessing to the nations.

It's a wonder that they've actually made it so far. In one sense these names shouldn't be here but they are. And it's all down to God's stubborn faithfulness to a bunch of failures.

And so as we look at this list of names we don't go isn't that boring. we are amazed at what God has done. Verse 27 With the two sons who had been born to Joseph in Egypt the members of Jacob's family which went to Egypt were 70 in all.

Now 70 isn't much of a nation is it? And they don't seem to be doing much blessing. Maybe you've got 70 in your family you wouldn't call yourself a nation.

Well nations have to start somewhere don't they? And that's where the story brings us. God assures us that he keeps his promise. He said he would have a nation and here he's building a nation.

[25 : 33] But our story doesn't end there. You see from this broken family God was going to bring his promise to fulfillment.

from the family line of Jacob would come eventually down through the years the saviour of the world Jesus Christ. The one who brings the blessing of new life and eternal hope to all the nations. You see God may have started out way back in Genesis with a nation of 70. God's love to God. But today there are hundreds of millions of people who have been brought into the family of God by trusting in Jesus Christ.

Listen to what the apostle Peter reminds us. You can follow it on the screen. Peter says, I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism.

Our problem often is favouritism but not with God. He accepts people from every nation. The one who fears him and does what is right.

[26 : 49] Everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. You see just as God said he is building a nation, a people belonging to him, a bunch of failures who have been forgiven and are welcomed into God's family.

And God loves everyone equally. Each one is treasured. There is no favouritism within the family of God.

And everyone is remembered and everyone is accounted for. This family, this nation is what we call the church. That's who we are, a nation gathering together, who have been commissioned by the risen Jesus to go and bring blessing to the nations.

Remember what Jesus said? The end of Matthew's gospel, chapter 28. Go and make disciples of all nations and surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.

age. There's that promise again. The ever-present promise. These are the last words of Jesus recorded by Matthew in his gospel.

[28 : 14] And of all the things Jesus wants us to remember, it's this promise that as you go as my people, I am with you always.

grace. I am ever-present in whatever you do. You see, the account of Jacob's family enables us to recall the assurances of God.

It gives us assurance that God will do what he says he will do. God is working through his people, people like us, who are gathered here in Carigaline, to build his church, to share the good news of Christ, so that all nations, all people, might be welcomed in.

And how do we know it's going to happen? Because of this story. Because of what God started and what he's continuing to do.

And it happens by the stubborn faithfulness of God. So as we follow the journey with these brothers, let's learn from them.

[29 : 34] As we journey with God together, let us be aware of the sins of our father. Deal with it. Otherwise it will come up to the surface and it will be destructive and divisive.

And as we journey, let us remember the promises of our God. He is with you. He is ever present. And let's together recall the assurances for our life. That God will keep his promise and God will build his church.

change. Let's pray together. our father God, there is much for us to learn as we walk our path, as we journey with you.

would you please help us to learn these three things that we've looked at today.

[30 : 57] Father, help us not to hide our sin, but to deal with it, to confess it, so that it doesn't become divisive or destructive.

father, thank you for the wonderful promise that you are ever present with us this week, wherever we go, whether it's to school or college, or maybe we have to go and see someone and we're a bit worried.

You are with us. And thank you for the great assurance that you have given to us, your church, your people. that you are building a people and you will see that your promises are fulfilled.

So help us to walk with you together. Help us to trust you, knowing that you are good. and it's in Jesus' name we all pray.

Amen. Well, we're going to sing a song which is one of praise.

[32 : 18] We join in with all creation to praise our great God God who works with sinners like us, who is present with us, and the God who gives us great assurance.

Let's