

Genesis 44-45

Read Chapter 44 and 45
Newly Discovered Benjamin's Song

Hints or Links

Deeper Meanings

Watch the Language

Now That'll Preach

Our New Clothes – Been Through the Water

Watch the Language – There are a few things that we don't want to miss about words or phrases that are used and that have been carefully chosen by the author.

vs. 16 - Judah tells Joseph that they're being punished for their iniquity and that it's caught up with them and has caught Benjamin in their trap as well

“we ourselves and the one who was found to have the cup”

What we're to see is that the brothers see history as repeating itself. Just as their evil deed seemed to punish their little brother Joseph and sell him into slavery, now their evil deed has caught up with not only them, but once again has punished and made a slave out of their new little brother Benjamin.

This is the whole point of all this testing. Joseph has recreated his story for Benjamin. What will the brothers do this time when they have a chance to be selfish and get off the hook by selling out little brother?

We're also given a hint at how serious an evil the brothers will be forgiven of by Joseph.

The word used in verse 16 עֲוֹן and translated as iniquity is used three other

places in Genesis:

Cain uses it to describe killing Abel (my iniquity is more than can be forgiven or that I can bear)

God uses it to describe the sins of the native Caananite population that earns their destruction (the iniquity of the Amorites) and the angels use it to describe Sodom to Lot (lest you be caught up in the iniquity of this place)

In all three other cases the word actually conveys the idea of not only iniquity but also the resulting punishment and in some versions is translated as such.

This is the first use of the word where it will be accompanied not with judgment and punishment but with forgiveness.

vs. 28 - Judah quotes Jacob as saying that he “concluded” or “decided” that Joseph had been torn apart by wild beasts - this isn’t just his opinion - as head of the clan he has to accept the brothers’ story just as a judge has to accept testimony. The quote “I have not seen him since.” shows that he really didn’t believe their story.

45:7 – Joseph tells the brothers that God sent him to Egypt ahead of them to preserve them as a remnant or a remainder or a portion that escaped and to provide for them a great deliverance.

That should remind you of something else from many chapters ago.

I’ll give you a hint...

When was another time when God used a man to preserve a remnant or a portion that escaped and to provide for them a great deliverance?

The brothers are promised the “good” of the land of Egypt

twice by Pharaoh and given ten donkeys worth of the good of the land to take back with them.

When was the last time things were declared to be “good?”

I’ll give you another hint:

So their sojourn in Egypt is to be a time of restoration or reconciliation, a restoration of the relationship between Joseph and his family, between the family themselves, a restoration of their good fortunes...

Just like a return to the Garden where everything was provided and everyone got along and everything was good or very good. The biggest job of restoration or reconciliation occurs at the end of the chapter when the brothers report back to Jacob.

He learns

- 1) his weak prayer has been answered
- 2) his sons have returned changed men
- 3) he’s to be reunited with Joseph
- 4) there’s no more worries about food or survival
- 5) he doesn’t even have to walk to Egypt

No wonder he doesn’t believe them and his heart becomes weak or numb.

It’s not until he sees all the wagons and goods that he actually believes what they’re telling him and declares it to be “רַב” meaning enough or sufficient or a great amount as his spirit revives...

“Just as the light of the lamp, when the supply of oil runs out and the light is on the point of going out, suddenly emits a brighter flame...when someone puts in a little oil, in just the same way this old man...on the point of expiring from disappointment...next learned that Joseph was alive and was in charge of Egypt....From being old, Jacob became young; he put aside the cloud of disappointment; he repelled the storm in his mind and then found himself at peace, with God disposing everything so that the good man should enjoy relief from all these awful trials and

share the happiness of his son.”

What is our **כָּרַח**?

0.45:24 - don't quarrel along the way - word translated as quarreling has a variety of meanings and is never translated as quarrel again. It is translated elsewhere as “to tremble” “to be afraid” “to be troubled” “to be moved” as to be upset or bothered (David and Absalom) to be disquieted (Samuel's spirit and Saul); to be shaken and to be angry or to rage - so he's probably not telling them not to fight along the way home so much as he is to not be troubled and afraid or upset by all that's happened - as we'll see in later chapters they'll still be worried about Joseph's wanting revenge on them even 13 years later.

but it **preaches** better to use quarreling because then you can make the application that just as we're new people and forgiven but tend to fall back in our old ways, so too the newly forgiven brothers might be tempted to fall back in their old ways of arguing and deceiving and blaming one another - after all, they're going back not only to tell Jacob about Joseph but they'll also have to confess to Jacob how Joe wound up there in the first place.

44:30 - Jacob's life is bound up or centered around Benjamin and he'll die if anything happens to Benjamin shows the danger of focusing your life on this world – which brings up the old idea of the wheel of fortune

That's not exactly what we're talking about.
The concept of the Wheel of Fortune is much older than the game show.

In fact, it may be even older than the wheel itself.

Deeper Meanings God did it to Joseph, not the brothers

Donald Grey Barnhouse

the jealous hatred of the brethren; the dreams of a youth; the passage of a caravan bound for Egypt; the preparation of Joseph by a life of adversity; the anger of Pharaoh and the imprisonment of two officials; the strange dreams of these prisoners and Joseph's supernatural gift of interpretation; the dreams of Pharaoh; the change of rainfall in a fourth of Africa to bring about the two cycles of abundance and famine by the flood and failure of the Nile; the elevation of Joseph to the throne of Egypt – all of these things were brought about naturally by the supernatural work of God who is Lord of all, in order to fulfill the counsel of His will.”

As with the character of Jacob last week, there are differing opinions about Joseph and his testing of the brothers.

#1 – Joseph was getting revenge on the brothers and was harsh and mean and wanted to scare them like they'd scared him.

#2 – Joseph had a careful plan worked out to make sure that his brothers had changed and to show themselves that they had changed

#3 – Joseph was just making all this up as he went along. He had an opportunity to see what type of people his brothers had become and he took it.

The brothers are given new clothes - we're called to be new creation - old man has died

Insert Video – Been Through the Water