



BIBLE STUDY

MAJOR CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE



<https://campus.cru.org/college/bsu/community-group-material/>

WEEK  **05**

JOSEPH

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OVERVIEW

What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?

GENESIS 45

Genesis 45 is one of the most emotional and meaningful chapters in the Bible because it brings the story of Joseph to its turning point. The chapter tells a powerful story about family, betrayal, and God's guiding hand. Joseph, who was once rejected by his brothers and sold into slavery, finally reveals who he is to them. His brothers stand before him in need, unaware that God has been at work through their past actions. When Joseph breaks down and weeps so loudly that everyone in the Egyptian household hears him, it shows just how real and human this moment is. His tears capture both the pain of past betrayal and the deep relief that comes with forgiveness and reconciliation.

This passage comes during a severe famine in Caanan leaving his brothers and family in ruin. This forces the family of Jacob south into Egypt, when Joseph invites them there. This sets up the following story of the exodus.

Calvin reads Genesis 45 as a definitive testimony to divine providence without moral compromise. Joseph clearly names his brothers' action as evil, yet attributes the outcome to God's sovereign purpose. For Calvin, this passage proves that God directs events through secondary causes, including sinful human wills, without becoming the author of sin. Joseph's forgiveness flows from theological clarity: because God ruled the event, Joseph is freed from personal vengeance. The chapter also marks God's intentional preservation of the covenant family, ensuring the promises to Abraham remain intact. – John Calvin, commentary on Genesis, trans John King, Vol 2. Genesis 31-50

Group Context Questions

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY AND HOW?

Who: is Joseph in the Bible?

What: did Joseph do in the Bible?

When: is Joseph first seen in the Bible?

Where: is Joseph at in the Bible?

Why: should we know about Joseph?

How: does Joseph and his story impact us?

VOCABULARY WORDS

Preserve

- to maintain or sustain

Tarry

- to wait, linger or stay expectantly for God's timing

Providence

- active sustaining with sovereign control and purposeful direction

Reconciliation

- restoration of brokenness to harmony, peace and original intent

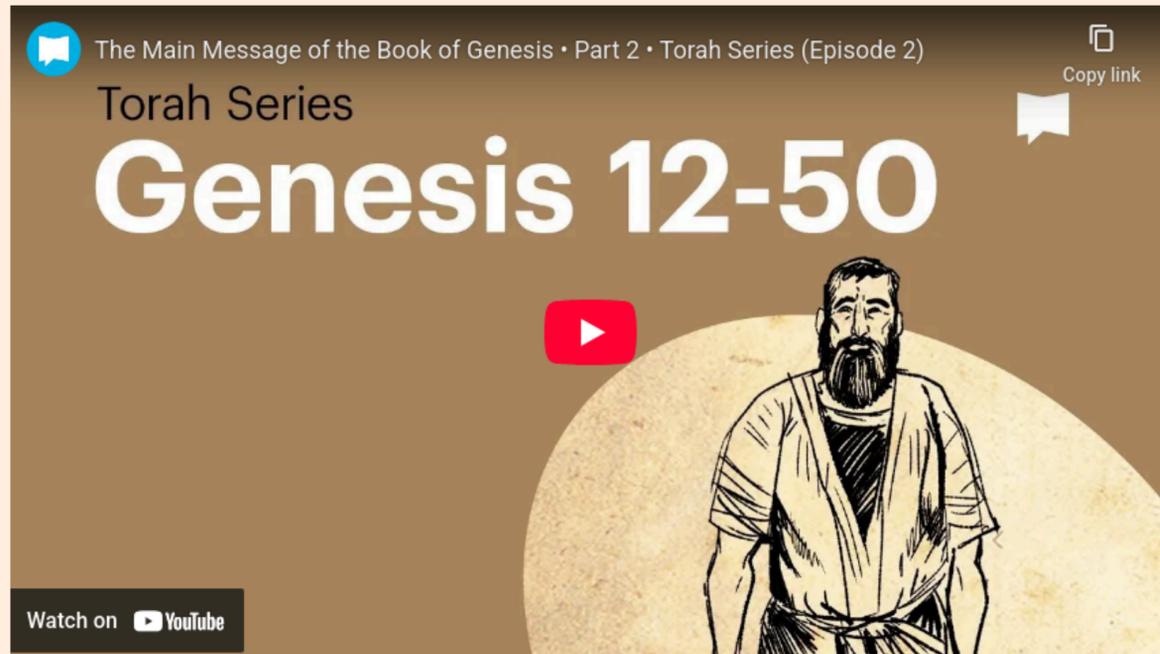
CONTEXT QUESTIONS

Allow your group to share some of their prior knowledge of who this character is and their significance. Familiarize yourself with this character so you can also answer. Make sure to do this in a way that is inclusive of those who may not have any prior knowledge.

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Watch This Video With Your Group

VIDEO LINK HERE:



This video discusses Genesis chapters 12-50 including the events of Joseph.

Allow your group to discuss what they gathered from the video. What stuck out to them? Eg. "If you were to take notes over this video what would be some of the main ideas you write down?"

VIDEO

- Feel free to share these videos with your group so they can also watch. You may also find any other outside sources that you might think to be valuable to their understanding of the Word.

What Are the Questions?

GENESIS 45

LAUNCH

Is there a time in your life where you have experienced suffering, but it worked out to be good? What was that like?

GENESIS 45: 1-8

1. What sticks out to you?
2. Why does Joseph cast out the people? Who does he allow to remain?
3. How do Joseph's brothers respond once he reveals himself? Why?
4. What does Joseph say to his brothers next? What does this say about Joseph's feeling towards his brothers?
5. What reasons does Joseph give to "not be distressed/dismayed"

GENESIS 45: 9-15

6. What does Joseph say that God intends to do with his story?
7. What does Joseph tell his brothers to do?
8. How do actions mark restoration in this relationship?

GENESIS 45: 16-28

9. What is Pharaoh's reaction to this interaction?
10. What is Jacob's reaction to the news of Joseph? What about after hearing his words?

What Are the Questions? (Continued)

MATTHEW 26: 14-16

NEW TESTAMENT CORRELATION

In light of Genesis 45, how can we look at Matthew 26: 14-16 and better understand the character of Christ? How can we use these passages and interpret scripture using other scripture?

MATTHEW 26: 14-16

11. What sticks out to you?
12. How does the betrayal and selling of Joseph relate to our New Testament passage and Jesus?
13. How does the way that Joseph responds to the ones who betrayed him speak to way that Jesus responds to those who betray him?
14. How do Joseph's brothers' response to seeing Joseph alive mirror humanity's response to seeing the risen Christ? How is this met by Joseph's response?
15. How does Joseph's claim that God sent him here point to Christ's claim of the same?
16. How does Joseph's mission statement in verse 7 display Christ in the gospels?
17. How does Pharaoh's command in Gen. 45:20 reflect what Jesus tells his followers?
18. How does the story of Jacob not believing that Joseph was alive at first but then coming to believe, speak to human condition? How does Jesus meet us in this?

APPLICATION

19. How do the brothers' actions towards Joseph reflect the ways that humans seek control, betray, and harm others for selfish gain? In ourselves?
20. In light of how Christ forgives us despite our betrayal, how can we also offer the same forgiveness?
21. Joseph provides grace and forgiveness for his brothers even after their betrayal. How has Jesus done the same for you?

FALLEN CONDITION

What do these passages reveal about our fallen condition?

- Human nature is profoundly corrupt and causes relationships to be extremely broken. Jealousy, betrayal and fear often guide these relationships rather than the truth, beauty and goodness of the gospel. Help your group understand this and discuss what our Christ's response is to this condition.

CHRIST CENTERED SOLUTION

What do these passages tell us about Christ's response?

- Along with Judas, we also betray and rebel against Christ in our sin. We all face jealousy and betrayal in human relationships and Christ shows us the severity of betrayal like this, but sets us free from our sin through the truth found in the gospel.

GRACE ENABLED RESPONSE

What do these passages teach us about how we should live?

- As Christ has graciously forgiven our rebellion against Him, we can model ourselves after Him and forgive those who wrong us, displaying the beauty of the freedom found in Christ.

What Are the Answers?

1. Allow your group to discuss.
2. Joseph becomes emotional at the return of his brothers, whether sorrow or joy we don't quite know.
3. They were dismayed at his presence. They most likely would've thought he was dead or still imprisoned.
4. He calls them to "Come near to me, please". This shows that he has let go of the iniquity of his brothers and has even been longing to see them.
5. He gives three instances of saying God sent me, indicating he holds them not to be at fault whatsoever, but that God chose to send him to serve his divine purpose.
6. Preserve life, preserve for you a remnant, rule over all the land of Egypt, prosperity in Goshen
7. Tell their father of his honor and all they have seen.
8. Joseph wept upon Benjamin and his other brothers.
9. He promises provision for them if they come to Egypt.
10. Jacob's heart becomes numb and does not believe. After he hears the words of Joseph, Jacob's spirit is revived and vows to go and see him.
11. Allow your group to discuss.
12. Both Jesus and Joseph were sold to suffering at a price by the ones close to them .
13. Joseph meets his brothers with tears in his eyes offering forgiveness to them because God used his suffering for good. In the same way Jesus meets us joyfully and offers forgiveness through his suffering that was the ultimate good.
14. Confronted with the risen Christ our flesh is confronted by the one we wronged now exalted in glory, causing a fear of God. Christ doesn't let us sit in our sin and condemnation but embraces us and offers life just as Joseph embraces Benjamin and offers them good things.
15. Joseph's claims make it clear that this tribulation was not some accident or result of human evil, but rather an instrument of God's sovereign plan. Jesus does the same in John 6:38 where he says, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me."
16. Joseph claims that God sent him to preserve a remnant of earth and to save lives by great deliverance. This is seen in Jesus' life by how he both preserves a remnant (John 6:40) and save lives by great deliverance (John 11:25). This speaks of both his work on the cross and the continuance of his work preserving his people.
17. Pharaoh tells Joseph to tell the brothers to leave all they have to come to Egypt, because the best of Egypt will be yours. Jesus tells his followers to give up what they have because the heavenly riches will be far greater than the things you have now.
18. Jacob's unbelief was caused by both his human condition but also his years of loss and grief over his beloved son. Just as Joseph meets Jacob's unbelief by evidence of life and provision, so has Christ in the proof of his life and resurrection and life-giving grace.
- 19-21. Allow your group to discuss.

JOSEPH

NEXT STEPS

What's Next?

DISCUSS WITH YOUR GROUP:

Should we continue discussion on this passage or move on through the text next week?

Do you guys feel confident in your understanding of what was discussed tonight?

Any questions? (Allow anyone to come to you in private if needed)

Announcements

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Where is Cru at this week?

What upcoming events do we have?

Any other announcements? Should be in the slack.

Prayer

BREAK OFF AND PRAY

Take this time as an opportunity to model prayer to those who are younger in their faith.

Provide opportunities for those who wish to pray.

Model different types of prayer like the ACTS model.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [How Does Joseph Foreshadow Jesus](#)
- [Joseph - A Study in God's Sovereignty](#)
- [The Joseph - Jesus Pattern](#)