

## March 16–22: Genesis 42–50, “God Meant it Unto Good”

### Joseph Forgives His Brothers

Jacob sent all his sons except Benjamin to Egypt to buy grain. They met with Joseph to make arrangements, but they did not recognize him as their brother.

It's clear that Joseph is very hesitant to accept them after they committed such a grievous sin against him.

Gen 42:8-11,16-17

8 And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.

9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

10 And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come.

11 We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies.

16 Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies

17 And he put them all together into ward three days.

What evidence do you see that Joseph was suspicious of his brothers and questioned their integrity?

(Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them  
ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved  
whether there be any truth in you: or else... ye are spies  
he put them all together into ward three days)

Joseph decided instead to keep just one brother in Egypt and send the others back to get Benjamin.

Gen 42:18-24

18 And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God:

19 If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses:

20 But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.

21 ¶ And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us.

22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

23 And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.

24 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

How did the brothers' react to the demands that Joseph made?

- Perhaps they felt this was a consequence of what they had done to Joseph.

(We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear Reuben... Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear?)

Why do you think Joseph wept when he overheard how his brothers reacted?

- Perhaps it was because he saw that his brothers felt guilt and remorse for what they had done to him.

Jacob's sons returned to their father after their first trip to Egypt and summarized their experience and Joseph's demands.

Gen 42:33-36

33 And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone:

34 And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land.

35 ¶ And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

36 And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me.

Why does Jacob conclude that "all these things are against me"?

(and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.  
Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away)

When the brothers returned with Benjamin, Joseph invited them to meet with him at his home.

Gen 43:26-34

26 ¶ And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth.

27 And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?

28 And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance.

29 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son.

30 And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there.

31 And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

32 And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

33 And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.

34 And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.

How did Joseph react to being with Benjamin again?

(his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep  
they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the  
youngest according to his youth  
but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs)

What evidence do you see that Joseph is starting to have a change of heart toward his brothers?

(And they sat before him... and the [Egyptians] marvelled one at another)

Arthur R. Bassett

"It is in Joseph's relationship with his brothers that one sees his most Christlike features, especially the characteristics of brotherly kindness and charity.... What a shock it must have been, then, when Joseph confronted his brothers again for the first time in twenty-two years. What thoughts must have raced through his mind! Again one senses his great patience in not revealing himself to them until he discovers their feelings.

"History would search far to find another scene so filled with human feelings as that of Joseph listening to his brethren... speak of their punishment for having sold their brother into slavery. Joseph responded with sternness, as God must sometimes do with us, but when one sees him moved to tears on two occasions-to the point that he must leave the room to hide his face from his brethren-one senses the depth of his Christlike love, filled with forgiveness for the truly penitent." ("Joseph, Model of Excellence," Ensign, Sept. 1980)

Joseph seeks to further test his brothers by setting them up as thieves, singling out Benjamin by planting a silver cup in his sack.

Gen 44:1-5

1 And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.  
2 And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.  
3 As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.  
4 And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?  
5 Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing.

How does this test give Joseph the chance to see whether his brothers have truly changed since they sold him into slavery?

Joseph tells his brothers that Benjamin must stay behind as his servant. Judah pleads for mercy for the sake of their father.

Gen 44:22,32-34

22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

33 Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

34 For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

How does Judah's concern for both Benjamin and his father show that his heart has changed?

(If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father  
let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord)

This appears to have convinced Joseph of the genuineness of his brothers' love for their father and Benjamin, and of their remorse for how they had treated him.

Gen 45:1-8

1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

In what ways does Joseph recognize the hand of God in all the hardships and trials he endured?

(God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

it was not you that sent me hither, but God)

Joseph B. Wirthlin

“Through Joseph, the Lord preserved the children of Israel and provided a place in Egypt for them to flourish and increase.

“This story is well known, but I urge you to read it again, focusing your attention on the integrity of Joseph and on the blessings it brought to him. He became the birthright son in the house of Israel and received an inheritance in the lands of the Americas. The Lord permitted him to prophesy of Moses, who would deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt and of Joseph Smith, the prophet of the restoration of the gospel in the latter days.” (CR, April 1990)

Joseph instructs his brothers to bring their father and all their families to Egypt, where they can prosper and be protected during the famine.

Gen 45:9-15

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children’s children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

What characteristic do you think Joseph possessed that explains his change from anger and suspicion to love and compassion toward his brothers?

Arthur R. Bassett

"I respect our father Joseph for many things—for his faith, his virtue, his knowledge, his temperance and patience, and for his godliness. But most of all I respect him for his brotherly kindness and love. These are his most godlike attributes; these are his touch-point with the Savior and his touch-point with us, his posterity. These are the attributes we should attempt to emulate as the grandchildren of this model of Christian excellence; one of the greatest men this world has ever produced, a father who taught all of his posterity what it means to truly know Christ." ("Joseph, Model of Excellence," Ensign, Sept. 1980)

Jacob and his household move from Canaan to Egypt.

Gen 46:1-4

1 And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.

3 And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:

4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

How do God's words to Jacob reassure him that God will keep the covenant made with Abraham?

(I will there make of thee a great nation  
I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again)

Verses 8 through 26 list all of Jacob's household who traveled to Egypt. When you add them together, the total comes to 66 people. By including Joseph, Asenath, Manasseh, and Ephraim, you arrive at the total of 70 descendants mentioned here in verse 27.

Gen 46:27-30

27 And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

28 ¶ And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and

they came into the land of Goshen.

29 And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

30 And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

What stands out to you about Joseph and Jacob's reunion, and why?

Jacob asks his sons to promise to bury him in the land of his fathers rather than in Egypt.

Gen 47:27-31

27 ¶ And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt:

30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.

31 And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

Why do you think it was important to Jacob to be buried in the land of Canaan?

(But I will lie with my fathers... bury me in their buryingplace)

-Perhaps it was related to the Resurrection, so that he would be in the same location as his fathers after Christ's Resurrection.

Jacob Blesses His Posterity

The Joseph Smith Translation provides additional insight into Isaac's blessing to Joseph (see Joseph Smith Translation Appendix).

JST Gen 48:6-11

5 And now, of thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt; behold, they are mine, and the God of my fathers shall bless them; even as Reuben and Simeon they shall be blessed, for they are mine; wherefore they shall be called after my name. (Therefore they were called Israel.)

6 And thy issue which thou begetteth after them shall be thine and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance in the tribes; therefore, they were called the tribes of Manasseh and of Ephraim.

7 And Jacob said unto Joseph, When the God of my fathers appeared unto me in Luz

in the land of Canaan, he swore unto me that he would give unto me and unto my seed the land for an everlasting possession.

8 Therefore, O my son, he hath blessed me in raising thee up to be a servant unto me, in saving my house from death.

9 In delivering my people, thy brethren, from famine which was sore in the land; wherefore, the God of thy fathers shall bless thee and the fruit of thy loins, that they shall be blessed above thy brethren and above thy father's house;

10 For thou hast prevailed, and thy father's house hath bowed down unto thee, even as it was shown unto thee before thou wast sold into Egypt by the hands of thy brethren; wherefore, thy brethren shall bow down unto thee, from generation to generation, unto the fruit of thy loins forever;

11 For thou shalt be a light unto my people, to deliver them in the days of their captivity from bondage and to bring salvation unto them when they are altogether bowed down under sin.

According to Jacob, how did Joseph bless both his family and future generations?

(he hath blessed me in raising thee up to... saving my house from death  
In delivering my people, thy brethren, from famine)

Because of Joseph's faithfulness, what does Jacob promise him and his descendants?

(they shall be blessed above thy brethren and above thy father's house  
thy brethren shall bow down unto thee, from generation to generation  
For thou shalt be a light unto my people, to deliver them in the days of their captivity from bondage and to bring salvation unto them when they are altogether bowed down under sin)

In what ways has this blessing been fulfilled?

Patricia L. Brown

"Joseph... lived a faithful life, trusting in Heavenly Father, saving his family temporally but also spiritually by obtaining the covenant blessings which remain in force for his posterity.... The great responsibility of Joseph's descendants... is clarified: 'For thou shalt be a light unto my people, to deliver them in the days of their captivity, from bondage; and to bring salvation.'... Joseph's posterity are to become saviors to their brethren of Israel (and by extension the rest of Father's children)." ("The life of Joseph," Church News, July 30th, 1994)

Jacob blesses Ephraim and Manasseh, giving the birthright to Ephraim.

Gen 48:13-14,17-22

13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto

him.

14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

19 And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

22 Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

Why is Ephraim given the greater blessing, and what does this mean for his descendants?

(truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations)

John Taylor

"Joseph observing what his father was doing, informed him that he was putting his right hand on the head of the younger boy, but the old man replied, I know it, my son. The Spirit of the Lord prompted him to do as he did—to confer the greater blessing upon Ephraim, the younger brother. It was for this reason that God spake through the mouth of Jeremiah concerning the gathering of Israel: 'I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn' (Jer 31:9). That is according to his purposes. He acknowledged and reconfirmed this birthright upon Ephraim the younger of the two sons of Joseph, when he referred to the dispensation of the fullness of times and the ushering in of its great work—when the Lord should set his hand to gather His people, and be a father to Israel, even to Ephraim His firstborn." (JD, 21:358)

Jacob's blessing of Joseph.

Gen 49:22-26

22 ¶ Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:

23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:

24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the

hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)  
25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:

26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

What does it mean that Joseph is a “fruitful bough” whose branches run over the wall?

LeGrand Richards

"Jacob said that Joseph was a fruitful bough whose branches would run over the wall (and we have always understood that the wall referred to the great waters)—and where was he to go over the wall? Unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills. Is there any theologian in this world who can tell us where those everlasting hills are to which the Lord, through the father of Joseph, promised Joseph that he and his people would go?

“He further said that his blessings would prevail above the blessings of his progenitors and his progenitors were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Can you imagine that God would have in store for that chosen one blessings greater than those of his progenitors, and then not provide that a record should be kept of the fulfillment of those promises unto that great branch of the house of Israel?" (CR, April 1967)

### Joseph’s Prophecy

In the Joseph Smith Translation, we find an account of Joseph prophesying of Moses, a branch of his posterity “carried into a far country,” Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon.

JST Gen 50:24-33

24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die and go unto my fathers; and I go down to my grave with joy. The God of my father Jacob be with you, to deliver you out of affliction in the days of your bondage; for the LORD hath visited me, and I have obtained a promise of the LORD that out of the fruit of my loins the LORD God will raise up a righteous branch out of my loins; and unto thee, whom my father Jacob hath named Israel, a prophet (not the Messiah who is called Shilo); and this prophet shall deliver my people out of Egypt in the days of thy bondage.

25 And it shall come to pass that they shall be scattered again; and a branch shall be broken off and shall be carried into a far country; nevertheless, they shall be remembered in the covenants of the LORD when the Messiah cometh; for he shall be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the Spirit of power, and shall bring them out of darkness into light: out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom.

26 A seer shall the LORD my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit

of my loins.

27 Thus saith the LORD God of my fathers unto me, A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins, and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren.

28 And he shall bring them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers; and he shall do whatsoever work I shall command him.

29 And I will make him great in mine eyes, for he shall do my work; and he shall be great like unto him whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel, out of the land of Egypt; for a seer will I raise up to deliver my people out of the land of Egypt; and he shall be called Moses. And by this name he shall know that he is of thy house; for he shall be nursed by the king's daughter and shall be called her son.

30 And again, a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins, and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins, and not to the bringing forth of my word only, saith the LORD, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them in the last days;

31 Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write, and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah shall grow together unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to a knowledge of their fathers in the latter days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the LORD.

32 And out of weakness shall he be made strong in that day when my work shall go forth among all my people, which shall restore them who are of the house of Israel in the last days.

33 And that seer will I bless, and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; for this promise I give unto you; for I will remember you from generation to generation; and his name shall be called Joseph, and it shall be after the name of his father; and he shall be like unto you; for the thing which the LORD shall bring forth by his hand shall bring my people unto salvation.