

- B. Trust in God's providence is essential to reconciliation.
  - i. We will never be willing to forgive one another unless we trust that in our suffering, suffering they caused, God is working to bring about good.
  - ii. If we don't see God's providence behind our suffering, we are left to bitterness and rage.

## VI. The Caravan (45:16-28)

- A. This is a caravan of life!
- B. *Don't quarrel on the way.*
  - i. Make every effort ... (Ephesians 4:3).
  - ii. Just because they are now reconciled as brothers, doesn't mean that all the irritants toward envy are going away.

### LIVE THE STORY

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Do broken relationships stand between you and God's abundant life? Does jealousy or envy describe your relationship to others?
- Do you have relationships in Christ that have improved but are still plagued by sin?
- Do you usually think of salvation as something completely unrelated to how you relate (or don't relate) to your brothers and sisters in Christ? What might Genesis 43-45 say about that?
- Discuss: "Gospel ministry is a ministry of reconciliation. But we cannot offer reconciliation with God that doesn't include reconciliation to one another."
- How might this story communicate the necessity of the church for people who want the life of God?
- Why is Joseph a type of Christ? Why should we see ourselves in the relationship between the brothers and Benjamin? Can you think of some NT texts that demonstrate the same truths?

## Genesis: Truth for Understanding Our World (31)

### *No Brother, No Face*

Jerry Cisar — April 8, 2018

Text: Genesis 43–45

**Introduction: *No brother, no face; No face, no food; No food, no life.***

## I. The Obstacle (43:1-15)

- A. Broken Relationships within the Covenant Family
  - i. *"You will not see my face unless your brother is with you."* (Gen. 43:3, 5; 44:23)
  - ii. Your brother and sister being *with* you, is essential to seeing God's face *and, therefore*, essential to life.
    - a) Joseph is a type of Christ.
    - b) NT examples of this same principle:
      - The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:12, 14-15)
      - 1 John 4:20
  - iii. The brothers can't be reconciled to Joseph until they are reconciled to Benjamin.
- B. Jacob's clinging to Benjamin.
  - i. Judah guarantees Benjamin's safety with his own life.
    - a) "The boy" is a little misleading.

b) Judah's solution is significantly better than Reuben's suggestion at the end of chpt. 42.

ii. Is this merely a ruse, or has Judah really changed?

C. Jacob entrusts Benjamin to God (43:11-15).

## II. The Meal (43:16-34)

A. Joseph plans a meal reminiscent of another meal.

B. Why are they so afraid?

C. They still don't see Joseph.

i. Joseph pushes hard on their hot button—envy.

The NY Times, in a scientific article about envy says, *“envy is the deep, often hostile resentment you feel toward somebody who has something you want, like wealth, beauty, a promotion or the admiration of peers. It is a vice few can avoid yet nobody craves, for to experience envy is to feel small and inferior, a loser shrink-wrapped in spite.”*<sup>1</sup>

ii. He pushes the “It's not fair” button.

## III. The Cup (44:1-17)

A. Joseph was very intentional in all he did.

i. They all tore their clothes.

ii. Then they head back to visit “the man” (Joseph).

B. “Judah and his brothers came in.”

i. Judah is the focus of the story.

ii. Judah is not professing innocence, but confesses guilt.

C. The Test

## IV. The Change (44:18-34)

A. Judah passes the test with flying colors.

“Disruption has its place. Facing one’s sin and pain, continually but never obsessively or centrally, is part of the spiritual journey.”<sup>2</sup>

B. Judah makes an exchange that reflects a change in the core of his being.

## V. The Reveal (45:1-15)

A. At the moment when they get the relationship with Benjamin right, Joseph's face is revealed.

i. They had already been reconciled even though they did not realize it.

ii. The evidence of their reconciliation is Judah's willingness to take Benjamin's place. *To lay down his life for his brother.*

1 <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/17/science/17angi.html>

2 Crabb, Larry. *Becoming a True Spiritual Community: A Profound Vision of What the Church Can Be* (KL 296-297).