



# **Viewfield Baptist Church**

To enable people to become fully devoted  
followers of Jesus Christ

## **Joseph Study Leaflet**

**Sunday 25 August**

**Sermon 16**

**“Reconciled, I’m reconciled”**

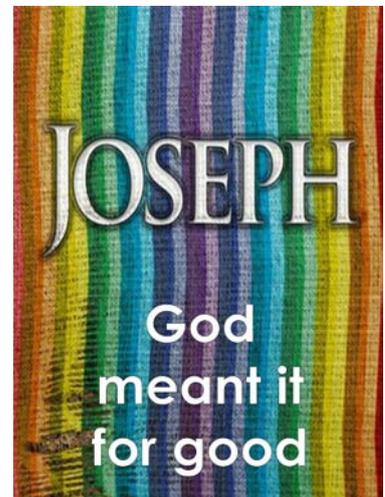
**Genesis 45v1-15**

This study guide will be used in our Small Groups, but can also be used by individuals.

You can download or listen to a recording of the sermon at this link:

<http://www.viewfield.org.uk/media/podcasts>

Leaflets about our small groups are available on the teabar. If you would like to join a small group, please speak to our Pastor, Rae, or to Pete Hutchison.



## **Viewfield Baptist Church**

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## Sermon 16 "Reconciled, I'm reconciled"

**We left the story of Joseph on a bit of a cliff-hanger.** As we come to Genesis 45, we approach one of the greatest moments in the entire Old Testament- the climax in a story that has gripped our attention. Through several interactions, over an extended period, Joseph created a scenario in which he would be able to observe his brothers' true character. During the first meeting, he told them not to return to Egypt unless they brought their youngest brother Benjamin. Many months later, they reluctantly returned with Benjamin. At the second meeting, Joseph secretly placed a silver cup in Benjamin's bag so that when it was discovered as they made their way home to Canaan, Benjamin would be arrested for stealing. For his punishment, he would become a slave in Egypt while the other brothers were free to go.

Joseph watched to see how his brothers would respond. Joseph's heart was certainly full when his brothers returned with Benjamin, their robes torn in distress, and their voices appealing for his release. He would also have been surprised and delighted when Judah - the brother who first suggested selling Joseph all those years ago - offered himself as a substitute for Benjamin's life. *Gen 44v33*. Clearly, these were not the same men as those who had betrayed Joseph over 20 years before. They were repentant.

As Judah's speech finished we are left on the edge of our seats. What will happen next? Will Joseph forgive them? How will the brothers respond? Will they be reconciled?

Let's consider the next episode and see what happens and what lessons we can learn.

### 1/ THE DISCLOSURE: "I am Joseph" v1-4

After Joseph had seen the selfless loyalty of his brothers towards Benjamin and heard Judah's heartfelt speech and his willingness to take his brother's place as a slave, he could contain himself no longer. *Gen 45v1*.

We are told in verse one that Joseph clears the room of everyone but him and his brothers. This is the first time, since that day at Dothan when they sold Joseph as a slave, that he has been alone with his brothers. Very often, when there has been a breakdown in relationships they need to be resolved privately. It is interesting that in Matthew 18 when Jesus is teaching about how to act when a fellow believer has sinned against you, he firstly says that you should meet with the person, just between the two of you.

The room has been cleared and Joseph is overcome with emotion. Then comes the disclosure: "I am Joseph." The simple statement exploded like a thunderclap in their ears.

We can imagine all that was going through their minds.

We are told in verse 3 that the brothers' reaction was one of fear: They could not answer him because they were "terrified in his presence." This was such a mixture of emotions for the brothers. They experienced shock, confusion, distrust, surprise, astonishment and anxiety. The brother they had sold into slavery was now the ruler over Egypt. They were speechless.

However, two things should have encouraged them:

- Joseph was weeping. We are told in verse 2 *"that he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it."*

The dominant emotion that Joseph felt for his brothers now was love. How deep the hurt of rejection must have gone but he was not looking for revenge. He had been moved by seeing the repentance of his brothers and now sought reconciliation. This was God's work in Joseph's heart.

- Joseph asks them to come closer. We are told in verse 4 that when Joseph sees his brothers so terrified so he says to them: *“Come close to me.”*

This Hebrew verb *Nah-gash* refers not just to special proximity but to an intimate closeness. He is reaching out to them. As they came closer, I think the penny began to drop. *“It really is him?”* Their mouths must have dropped open. *“He is Joseph.”* He spoke to them again and not only identified himself as Joseph but also spoke about what they had done. The family secret was not a secret anymore. *v4b*

## **2/ THE PURPOSE: “God meant it for good.” V4b-8**

Joseph then goes on to describe the higher purpose in the events have unfolded. Clearly, the brothers were in the wrong and were guilty. However, he encourages them not to focus on their mistakes and sins but to focus on what God has done for all of them.

God overruled the brothers’ hateful attitude and cruel actions and worked it altogether for good. In fact, three times Joseph declares that God’s hand was behind it all. *V5,v7,v8. “God meant it for good.” GEN 50v20*

God had a higher purpose. Weirsbie says: *“God sent Joseph to Egypt so that Jacob’s family could be preserved and the nation of Israel be born and ultimately give the Word of God and the Saviour to the world.”*

Please take comfort today from the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. He is the King of the universe and he reigns and rules from his heavenly throne. I want you to find peace in the fact that he can overturn your bad decisions; that he can cover your mistakes; that he can blot out your transgressions; and that he can retrieve good out of evil. *Proverbs 16v9, 19v21.* HAVE FAITH. God is working out his sovereign will.

## **3/ THE GENEROSITY: “You shall live in the region of Goshen.” V9-13**

Joseph, empowered by the Lord has shown amazing grace towards his brothers. He is not treating them as their sins deserved. He continues this generosity in giving them an offer they cannot refuse. Joseph instructs his brothers to return home, to tell their Father the news, to gather all their belongings and to come and to live in Egypt permanently. *V9-13.*

He says to them: *v10: “You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me- you- your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have”.* This was a region in the Eastern part of the Nile Delta. It was very fertile as it remains so to this day. This was not just any piece of land. This was the best land. *v18.* Joseph is providing for them all. It is bountiful provision. *V11: “I will provide for you there.”*

In Joseph, the Lord of all Egypt we see a picture of the Lord Jesus. We are told in the Acts of the Apostles that Jesus is Lord of all. *Acts 2v36, 10v36.*

As his disciples we have experience his amazing grace towards us. The one who is our Lord is generous towards us. He has promised his presence with us. He has promised to protect us. He has promised to provide for us and to provide abundantly. We are told in *2 Cor 1v20: “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.”*

He is sufficient. He is enough.

## **4/ THE RECONCILIATION: “And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them.” V14-15**

This was not a time for explanations and excuses but for honest expressions of love and forgiveness. Joseph embraced his brothers and kissed them and they all wept together *v14-15.*

What a beautiful moment this is. Joseph forgives and is reconciled with his brothers.

Keep in mind that this reconciliation was only possible because Joseph had suffered and triumphed. Here we see a beautiful picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ did for sinners in his death on the cross and his resurrection. Like Jesus, Joseph went from suffering to glory, from the prison to the throne, and was able to share his wealth and glory with others.

The wonderful truth of the Gospel is that we can be reconciled with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. **2 Corinthians 5v18.**

Despite the fact that Joseph had graciously forgiven them for what they had done, the brothers found it hard to fully accept this. After Jacob dies, they are worried about the possibility that Joseph might now pay them back. However, Joseph reassures them of his forgiveness. **Genesis 50v14-21**

The same can be true in our walk with God. We are justified through faith in Christ. We are reconciled to God through our faith in Christ. Yes, we still fail and have to confess sin so that we can grow more like Christ. However, there are times when we have confessed sin and repented of sin but we still struggle to accept we have been forgiven. Friends look to the cross and see again the grace and mercy of God towards us. Do not walk around carrying guilt.

**We are told in verse 15 that “Afterwards his brothers talked with him.”** Weirsbie in his commentary says: **“This is a simple sentence that speaks volumes in what it doesn’t report.”** We have every reason to believe that the brothers apologised or what they had done and definitely updated Joseph on the family news. They had over twenty years of news to catch up on.

However, I am sure that every time the brothers went to again go over their mistakes and sin he would say: “We’re not going there. That was then, this is now. God had a plan all along and it’s worked out for our good and for his glory. Let’s talk about that.”

In response to God’s amazing grace, let us be gracious to others. Let’s forgive as he has forgiven us.

## Bible study questions

Icebreaker: “Can you think of a story from a film or TV series that includes a wonderful reconciliation?”

1. Why is reconciliation so important?
2. Why was it important that the disclosure of Joseph’s identity and that reconciliation happened in private?
3. We are told that the brothers were terrified when Joseph disclosed his identity? Why?
4. What two things encouraged them at this time? V2 & v4.
5. Joseph then describes God’s purpose in all that had happened. What was it? V5, v7, v8 & 50v20.
6. What comfort can the believer take from the doctrine of the sovereignty of God?
7. In what ways did Joseph show amazing grace to his brothers? V9-13
8. In what ways has the Lord shown amazing grace to us? In what ways should we show grace to others?
9. Discuss the moment of reconciliation as described in verses 14-15.
10. Discuss the significance that through faith in Christ we are reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5v18.

Application: “Is there anyone you need to forgive and with whom to seek reconciliation?”