

Genesis 45

Genesis 45:5 be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves

"Piety or godliness was also an integral part of Joseph. Though none of his prayers are recorded, one senses throughout the narrative of his story the closeness that he feels with the Lord. The hand of God is in every affair of his life. He refuses the invitation of Potiphar's wife on the grounds that it would be an offense against God. When he is reunited with his brothers in Egypt, he quiets their fears of retaliation by explaining that their selling him into Egypt was the Lord's way of allowing him to prepare the way before them.

"It is in Joseph's relationship with his brothers that one sees his most Christlike features, especially the characteristics of brotherly kindness and charity. In naming his son Manasseh, Joseph gives the understanding that the Lord has caused him to 'forget all my toil, and all my father's house' (Gen. 41:51). 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 (who were unaware that he could understand them, since he had always spoken to them through an interpreter) 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.

"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." (Arthur R. Bassett, "Joseph, Model of Excellence," *Ensign*, Sept. 1980, 13)

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One deeply admires those wronged who, nevertheless, go on doing that which is right, refusing to become offended or bitter. Let others charge God foolishly (see Job 1:22); these faithful souls are magnanimous and forgiving, as was a generous Joseph in Egypt to his erring brothers: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." (Gen. 45:6.) Such Saints fashion forgiveness where others would revel in resentment! (*Ensign*, May 1983, 11)

Genesis 45:5 God did send me before you to preserve life

Joseph's relationship with his brothers is a type for Jehovah's relationship with the children of Israel. The scriptures speak of this latter relationship as a marriage instead of a brotherhood, but the betrayal, mercy, forgiveness, and redemption are the same. In this respect Joseph is a type for Christ.

- Joseph was disregarded by Jacob's sons; Jehovah was rejected by the children of Israel, "thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." (Isa. 43:22)
- Joseph's brothers considered murder and rejected him; the children of Israel played the harlot in worshipping other gods, "Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot." (Jer. 3:6)
- Joseph was sold as a slave for 20 pieces of silver; Jesus, the pre-mortal Jehovah, was sold for 30 pieces of silver (Matt. 26:15)
- Joseph commanded his servants to frighten his brethren and show them their wickedness (Gen. 44); Jehovah commanded his prophets to demonstrate the same, "Cry aloud, spare not... and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." (Isa. 58:1)
- Joseph's brethren bought corn from Joseph but never had to pay for it; Jehovah, the Bread of Life, also offers a free meal, "come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa 55:1)
- Joseph had mercy for his brethren in spite of being treated brutally; Jehovah has mercy for the children of Israel in spite of them playing the harlot, "I will mention the lovingkindesses of the Lord, and he praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindesses." (Isa 63:7; Isa 54:6-8)

- Joseph forgives and forgets the betrayal; Jehovah forgives Israel saying, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." (Isa. 43:25)
- Joseph was sent by God to preserve the lives of his family; Jehovah was sent by God to save Israel and all mankind.
- Joseph's emotions were overwhelming when reunited with his brethren; Jehovah's love for Israel is overwhelming (3 Ne. 17:6, 20-21)
- Joseph fell upon their necks, wept, and kissed his brethren; the Lord will unite the city of Enoch and Zion, "we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other." (Moses 7:63)
- Joseph surprised his brethren revealing his identity with "I am Joseph;" the Messiah will surprise the Jews announcing his identity with "I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God." (D&C 45:52)
- Joseph prepared a temporal salvation for Israel; Jehovah prepared a temporal *and* spiritual salvation for Israel.

One of the more interesting phenomena in the Old Testament is to identify how a historical narrative can testify of Christ. As if certain events were scripted to foreshadow the mission of Jesus Christ, many stories, including this one, preach of and point to Christ. The Book of Mormon Jacob said, "the scriptures... truly testify of Christ (and he was talking about the Old Testament). Behold, I say unto you that none of the prophets have written, nor prophesied, save they have spoken concerning this Christ." (Jacob 7:10-11) Abraham was a type for the Father, Isaac for the Son, Jacob's line would produce the Christ, Joseph was a type for Jehovah, Moses was a prophet like unto the Messiah (Deut. 18:18), and so on, and so on.