

**Series: The Providence of God #1471**

**Title: Genesis 41, 42, 45**

***Joseph Meets His Brothers***

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world! I trust you are ready to jump back into the Bible with me as we continue to follow one of the Bible's most popular true stories: the life of Joseph! This is told in Genesis chapters 37-50 and we have a particular interest in reading and discussing what happens to Joseph. In his life we find the providence of God over evil and sin.

At the beginning of the Bible, in Genesis 3, we find evil and sin in the Garden in Eden, and we want to know why God has allowed for this? Answering this great question, biblically, leads us to the providence of God. And that is why we are here: what is meant by God's providence? My task is to be clear about this, and to keep us on track teaching us about the way God overrules evil and sin for His good purposes. Please pray for me, as I do this! I sincerely ask for your prayers.

And pray for yourself and these others listeners, that the Holy Spirit will use God's Word to transform us. And let us humble ourselves before Christ, our Master Teacher, and apply everything we learn to our real lives, down here moving along in the rhythms of another Monday. Wherever you are, I pray you will be positively impacted by the investment of time you make into this ministry: *God Is!*

Last week we took in quite a bit. We followed Joseph all the way to the end of Genesis chapter 41. And we saw how God providentially directs the actions in Joseph's life, working all things together for the honor and glory, not of Joseph, but for the honor and glory of *God!* We observed Joseph's popularity and personality. He is very popular with his Dad, which gets him into the trouble that manifests God's providential hand in his life. And God shapes his personality such that Joseph is a self-assured and confident young man. Well, that kind of personality is what allows Joseph to survive all of his ordeals, which include these.

Over the course of time Joseph has gone from visiting his brother's at Dothan in Canaan, out tending sheep, to in chains and dragged as a slave down to Egypt (although God did intervene so that his life was saved by two of his brothers Reuben and Judah), then Joseph was purchased by Potiphar and put in charge of his household, only to be exiled to jail as a prisoner because of a false accusation of sleeping with Potiphar's wife, and then through one providential act after another, Joseph rises to Prime Minister of all of Egypt. Only the Pharaoh of Egypt has higher rank! And all of this because God permitted evil and sin against Joseph, but then God directed, restrained and limited, and overruled such evil and sin so that here Joseph is. Right where God wants him.

And this is where we pick-up today at Genesis chapter 42. As we begin the reading let me actually reach back to Genesis 41, verse 57. The Bible says, "***The people of all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.***" That is Genesis 41.57 and it tells us something very significant. The famine that Joseph had predicted earlier when he interpreted Pharaoh's dream, has come to fruition. And not only has Egypt been affected, but so too has been the territory surrounding Egypt, and *that* includes the land of Canaan.

I remind you that Canaan is where Joseph's father and his brothers – his whole family – are living and where they are now starving. So when the Bible says that Joseph's father Jacob "saw that there was grain in Egypt," it means that if he and his children and grandchildren want to eat, they better go down there and get some of that grain.

And now, if you have your Bible handy, grab it and turn to Genesis 42. I want to read Genesis 42, verses 1-3, then I will skip verse 4 because it includes a detail we do not have time to discuss. Then I will read verses 5-8. Genesis 42, verses 1-3 and 5-8. This is the Word of the Lord.

**“Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, ‘Why are you staring at one another?’<sup>2</sup> He said, ‘Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy *some* for us from that place, so that we may live and not die.’<sup>3</sup> Then ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy grain from Egypt. (Going down to verse 5 of Genesis 42)<sup>5</sup> So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, for the famine was in the land of Canaan *also*.**

**<sup>6</sup> Now Joseph was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph’s brothers came and bowed down to him with *their* faces to the ground.<sup>7</sup> When Joseph saw his brothers he recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke to them harshly. And he said to them, ‘Where have you come from?’ And they said, ‘From the land of Canaan, to buy food.’<sup>8</sup> But Joseph had recognized his brothers, although they did not recognize him.”**

For your reference, that was Genesis 42, verses 1-8. (I did leave out verse 4.) And remember, these ten brothers think Joseph is long dead. So they would not suspect that he would be alive, let alone that Joseph was now the second in command of all of Egypt and the man to whom they bowed. But we know the reason Joseph is alive and well and here is because of the invisible hand of God on his life. God’s purposes – even through all the evil and sin he has endured – God’s purposes for Joseph will be fulfilled.

Well, we do not want to get bogged down in this lengthy (although intriguing) story, so we will move now in our Bibles all the way over to Genesis chapter 45 in a moment. But I do want to encourage you to read all of Genesis chapters 42 through 44. They’re packed with a powerful punch of truth. There is much to learn therein, yet time here marches on. I will just summarize those chapters by saying Joseph interacts with his brothers in some remarkable ways, more than once.

Joseph comes to learn that there is yet another brother, younger than Joseph. His name is Benjamin. And this makes Joseph *very* emotional. He weeps. And when we get to the opening of chapter 45 Joseph cannot hold back his emotion any longer. He will now reveal his true identity to his brothers. Oh! This is *awesome!* So join me as I read Genesis 45, verses 1-15. Again this is a more lengthy reading than we’re used to, but it is such a beautiful and meaningful story. I will let the Bible speak for itself in Genesis chapter 45 beginning at verse 1.

**“Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, ‘Have everyone go out from me.’ So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.<sup>2</sup> He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *of it*.<sup>3</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?’ But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.**

**<sup>4</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Please come closer to me.’ And they came closer. And he said, ‘I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.<sup>5</sup> Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.<sup>6</sup> For the famine *has been* in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.<sup>7</sup> God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.**

**<sup>8</sup> Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.**

**<sup>9</sup> Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, ‘God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.<sup>10</sup> You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have.<sup>11</sup> There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine *to come*, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.’**

**<sup>12</sup> Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin *see*, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you.<sup>13</sup> Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.’**

**<sup>14</sup> Then [Joseph] fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on [Joseph's] neck. <sup>15</sup> He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with [Joseph]."**

Amazing, isn't it? Genesis chapter 45, verses 1-15. And we are going to get into this tomorrow on *God Is*. So I hope you will hold this in your mind and heart and be prepared to draw from the text much more on the providence of God, which shows up here in a clear and profound way.

I am very aware that you may not be able to read the Scripture as you listen. You are otherwise occupied. No worries, as they say in Australia. Grab a hold of your Bible tonight and read Genesis chapter 45.1-15 before you turn out the lights, slumber, and sleep. Or, read it if you cannot sleep. This will prepare you for our next gathering. And do not forget the God Is Podcast and today's manuscript available from [godisministry.org](http://godisministry.org), that's [godisministry.o-r-g](http://godisministry.o-r-g). Click on the podcast then click "Read Along" and follow the manuscript. Do this. Then, join us tomorrow as we continue to discover who God Is.

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