

Sermon Questions for Life Groups

Amazing Revelations: Genesis 45-46

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Sunday, May 8, 2016

*These questions are generated by several authors for Life Group discussions
or family or personal devotions*

1. What comfort do you have from the doctrine of God's sovereignty? Do you believe that the sovereignty of God can overrule anything that Trump or anyone else can do?
2. What is it that causes Joseph to open the floodgates of his emotions and reveal his identity (see chapter 44)? What changes did Joseph see that moved his heart so powerfully?
3. In Chapter 45, Joseph reveals his identity to his brothers. Upon hearing this revelation, they are silent before him for awhile. Put yourself in the shoes of Joseph's brothers and describe what emotions you are feeling right now and explain why you are feeling this way.
4. Joseph not only reveals his identity to his brothers, he also reveals his theology. Note everything that is said about God in this passage. What did Joseph believe about what had happened to him? Note what he says about his brothers' culpability and God's sovereignty. Can you reconcile these two truths?
5. How can God's sovereignty be effective in your attempts to forgive others, as Joseph did?
6. What did Joseph's belief in God's sovereignty and providence enable him to do? Think back in the previous chapters and trace what his belief in God enabled him to do and avoid?
7. In what ways does God's sovereignty trouble us intellectually? In what ways does God's sovereignty bring us great blessings? What blessings came to Joseph because of his belief in God's sovereignty?
8. What does this passage reveal about Pharaoh's attitude to Joseph and his family? This resulted in Israel being in Egypt for many years. What was God's purpose in bringing Israel into Egypt? Note how God assures Jacob not to be afraid to go to Egypt. How did going to Egypt actually benefit the forming of the Israelite nation?
9. Shortly after this passage, we are introduced to Moses and a new Pharaoh. Throughout the book of Exodus, it states that God hardens Pharaoh's heart and yet while He also punishes him for not letting the Israelites go after each plague. Does today's passage help you to reconcile this seemingly difficult teaching from the Bible and if so, how does it help you to do so?

10. In Genesis chapter 46:1-7, God reveals His plan to Jacob to make him into a great nation there; In Genesis 26, God spoke to Isaac in verses 1 – 5 to reassure him of God’s blessings and promises due to the obedience of Abraham - read Genesis 12:2 - "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing". It is interesting that God repeats His promises to both Isaac and to Jacob that He made to Abraham. Discuss with your Life Group how we can hope to ensure that God’s generational blessings can continue to your children, grandchildren and beyond? In the secular world, it is commonly stated that successful family run businesses often close after the second or third generation, can you think of any reasons why this is the case? In like manner, why do successive generations not follow the faith of their ancestors?
11. As we examine and accept that God is Sovereign in our lives, are there any potential ‘conflicts’ between this theological fact with the understanding that humans are also responsible for the choices that we make? How can we reconcile these two principles of Divine control with Human Free Will? As examples, read Philippians 2:12-13 and Romans 10:1-21. Can we make a general statement to explain this apparent contradiction?
12. Read Romans 9:10-24 and discuss the following:
- How do verses 17-21 make you feel about Pharaoh and about how God deals with you in your own life?
 - How does this passage as a whole build on what John taught about God's sovereignty throughout the entire family line of Abraham?
 - Is this passage a comfort to you or is it a difficult teaching to wrap your mind around?
13. How does God's sovereignty line up with what has been happening in Fort McMurray?