

HOMESICK

THE LESSON: GENESIS 45+50

Have you ever been homesick? Being away from the ones that we love is never easy, whether it is short-term or long-term, by choice or by necessity. The experience can leave us feeling alone, lost, and helpless. In such times we must stay rooted in our faith, and we must entrust to God the people we love, knowing that he loves them even more than we do. We don't always get to find out why God allows painful separations in our lives, but if we will trust him then one day we will see that he's been working through it all for our good and his glory.

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You may have heard Joseph's story before. It's an incredible one. He was born into a large, competitive family, and he was his father's favourite son. His brothers resented him and when they got the chance they sold him to traders in a caravan that carried him far from all that he'd known. Joseph ended up a slave in Egypt. But repeatedly throughout Joseph's story, scripture tells us that the Lord was with him. Serving in the house of a powerful Egyptian, *the Lord was with him*. Wrongly accused and sent to prison, *the Lord was with him*. And when he was summoned from prison to the King's court, *the Lord was with him*.

When Joseph was 30 years old, he entered the service of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and was made governor over the land. He had been chosen to implement a plan to store up food because a famine was coming. When the famine did come, it stretched far and wide and people came from all over to seek food, including Joseph's own brothers. Joseph did not reveal himself to them immediately, but tested them till he was satisfied that they had learned from what they'd done to him so many years before. Check out what happened next.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE "FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES", WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER](http://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER).)

Do you have friends or family members that have moved away? People whom you used to see often but don't any more? Take some time to pray for them, remembering that God loves them even more than you do. (*And he loves you even more than they do*). Close your time with the following prayer:

O God, who art present in every place: Look down with thy mercy upon those whom we love, now absent from us; give thine angels charge over them, and defend them from all dangers of body and soul; bring us together again, if it be thy holy will; grant that both they and we, drawing nearer to thee, may draw nearer to one another, and in the end, united in thy presence, may evermore rejoice together in our heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (PRAYER FOR HOME AND LOVED ONES FROM FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED AT SEA, BCP P. 633)

HOMESICK

GENESIS 45+50: **GOD'S PLAN IS THE ONE THAT PREVAILS**

45¹Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, “Make everyone go out from me.” So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ²And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³And 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.

⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, “Come near to me, please.” And they came near. And he said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest. ⁷And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹Hurry 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 tarry. ¹⁰You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.’ ¹²And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³You must tell my father of all my honour in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.” ¹⁴Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

50¹⁵When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.” ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷‘Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.