

Genesis 45:3-15

³Joseph said to his brothers,
‘I am Joseph.
Is my father still alive?’

But his brothers could not answer him,
so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers,
‘Come closer to me.’

And they came closer.

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 five more years
in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest.

⁷God 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 delay.” ¹

¹⁰You shall settle
in the land of Goshen,
and you shall be near me,
you and your children and your children’s children,
as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.

¹¹I will provide for you there
—since there are five more years of famine to come—
so that you and your household, and all that you have,
will not come to poverty.” ¹

²And now your eyes
and the eyes of my brother Benjamin
see that it is my own mouth
that speaks to you.

¹³You must tell my father
how greatly I am honoured in Egypt,
and all that you have seen.

Hurry and bring my father down here.’

¹⁴Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept,
while Benjamin wept upon his neck.

¹⁵And he kissed all his brothers
and wept upon them;
and after that his brothers talked with him.

Reading the Torah This Week

Suddenly, once, we get Genesis *toledot*
Joseph revealed, reconciled to his brothers
Reconstruing the prequel and sequel stories

The brothers' criminal attempt at fratricide
pales before Joseph's complicity in Egyptian imperialism
which will lead to slavery until Exodus

At the end of Black History Month,
there's plenty of grist for our mill,
on the eve of a provincial election day

I expect to avoid it this Sunday in worship
and regret that I miss Tues/Thurs Zoom study
(I'm taking study days, a 'reading week')

I last preached this in 2023, tied to TRC reflections,
as the RCL walks us through the Joseph cycle in Year A :
<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2023/08/reconciling-steps.html>

A less successful podcast version in 2022:
<http://www.hereticslikeus.com/2022/02/merciful-relief-genesis-45.html?q=%22Genesis+45>

In 2018 context 'Genesis:Generations' as a whole:
<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2018/07/completing-yosefs-cycle-chapters-43-48.html>

1 Corinthians 15:35-50

³⁵ But someone will ask,
'How are the dead raised?
With what kind of body do they come?'

³⁶ Fool!
What you sow
does not come to life
unless it dies.

³⁷ And as for what you sow,
you do not sow the body that is to be,
but a bare seed,
perhaps of wheat
or of some other grain

³⁸ But God gives it a body
as he has chosen,
and to each kind of seed
its own body.

³⁹ Not all flesh is alike,
but there is one flesh
for human beings,
another for animals,
another for birds,
and another for fish.

⁴⁰ There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies,
but the glory of the heavenly is one thing,
and that of the earthly is another.

⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun,
and another glory of the moon,
and another glory of the stars;
indeed, star differs from star in glory.

42 So it is with the resurrection of the dead.

What is sown is perishable,
what is raised is imperishable.

⁴³It is sown in dishonour,
it is raised in glory.

It is sown in weakness,
it is raised in power.

⁴⁴It is sown a physical body,
it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a physical body,
there is also a spiritual body.

⁴⁵Thus it is written,
'The first man, Adam,
became a living being';
the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

⁴⁶But it is not the spiritual that is first,
but the physical, and then the spiritual.

⁴⁷The first man was from the earth, a man of dust;
the second man is from heaven.

⁴⁸As was the man of dust,
so are those who are of the dust;
and as is the man of heaven,
so are those who are of heaven.

⁴⁹Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust,
we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

⁵⁰What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this:
flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,
nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Reading the Epistle This Week

3rd kick at mortality – or avoiding it
This bit of 1 Cor 15 invites empirical arguments –
Metaphysics and phenomenology of resurrection

Paul's argument from *toledot* of 'first' Adam
Framing Jesus as equally pivotal 'last' Adam
May be better preached from Romans

How do our communities construe this,
And how do we equip them –
Or simply straddle cognitive dissonance?

I confess that I can't find preaching notes on it –
in the 1980's I worked at with modern hermeneutics
resisted dualism using Nelson's 'Embodiment'

I'm taking a study week, Feb 17-21
So won't be online for these Zoom calls –
'fill your boots' – or move on to the gospel!

At the end of 3 weeks of 1 Corinthians 15
Are you differently equipped
To hear and to speak in the face of death?

Luke 6:27-38

27 'But I say to you that listen,
Love your enemies,
do good to those who hate you,
²⁸ bless those who curse you,
pray for those who abuse you.

²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek,
offer the other also;
and from anyone who takes away your coat
do not withhold even your shirt.

³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you;
and if anyone takes away your goods,
do not ask for them again.

³¹ Do to others
as you would have them
do to you.

³² 'If you love those who love you,
what credit is that to you?

For even sinners
love those who love them.

³³ If you do good
to those who do good to you,
what credit is that to you?

For even sinners
do the same.

³⁴ If you lend to those
from whom you hope to receive,
what credit is that to you?

Even sinners lend to sinners,
to receive as much again.

³⁵ But love your enemies,
do good, and lend,
expecting nothing in return.

Your reward will be great,
and you will be children of the Most High;
for he is kind
to the ungrateful
and the wicked.

³⁶ Be merciful,
just as your Father is merciful.

37 'Do not judge,
and you will not be judged;

do not condemn,
and you will not be condemned.

Forgive,
and you will be forgiven;

³⁸ give,
and it will be given to you.

A good measure,
pressed down, shaken together, running over,
will be put into your lap;
for the measure you give
will be the measure you get back.'

Reading the Gospel This Week

We generally boil this one down to:

“The Golden Rule” of v.31

But remember:

‘When everybody thinks the same thing,
Then nobody’s thinking’

In context, this is not lowest-common-denominator ethics,
but a call to a higher morality from and among Christians –
contrasting universal human duty

Compare Matthew 5 Sermon on the Mount ethics,
‘higher righteousness’ in that gospel –
And notice Mark’s omission of it all

Anyhow, as Tina Turner opens ‘Proud Mary’
You can start ‘nice and easy’ –
But we never stop there!

Sorry to miss this week’s Zoom discussions...

I did preach this gospel last round, in 2022:

<http://www.billbrucewords.com/2022/02/fair-exchange.html>