



"Unfathomable Forgiveness"

Genesis 45: 1-15

Rev. JD Moffett

August 9, 2026

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! ⁵ And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. ⁶ For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. ⁷ But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance."^[a]

⁸ "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. ⁹ Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay. ¹⁰ You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.'

¹² "You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. ¹³ Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly."

¹⁴ Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him

In the Genesis account we see Joseph when he was second in command to Pharaoh in Egypt. He is in the palace passing out food to the famine-struck people. But do we all remember the background of how he got there?

He was his father's favorite son prancing around in his special coat. Then his jealous brothers threw him into a pit and sold him to some Ishmaelites who sold him to Potiphar who later put him in prison. Then he was called to the palace to interpret Pharaoh's dream. After that he was promoted to look after the distribution of grain during the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine.

When the famine got so bad back home in Israel, his brothers came to Egypt to get some food. After Joseph tests his brothers by basically planting stolen goods in their bags and they plead for forgiveness. Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers and tells them not to be distressed or angry with themselves. He kisses them and explains that he does not hold anything that happened to him against them.

WHAT??? This is such unfathomable forgiveness! I mean he wouldn't have had to suffer the pain of the pit and prison if they had not almost tried to kill him! Certainly, it was all their fault! How could he forgive them? But Joseph says it was God's way of getting him into the position to be able to save not only the people of Egypt, but his own family as well. "God sent me before you to preserve your life."

Sometimes God will take us through tough times to come out on the other side in a better situation.

About two weeks before baseball season started my senior year, I was excited. I was hoping to get a baseball scholarship, and go to the minors, and hopefully be a MLB outfielder. However, one day, I was outside running around and something caught my eye. Don't know what it was, but it drew my attention.

When I looked back there was a stick right in front of me. When I got up, I could not see out of my left eye. I ran inside to look at it in the mirror, and all I saw in my eye was blood. So, I went into the living room where dad was on the computer, and I asked him, "Does this look okay?" "No," my dad said, "No, it is not okay."

So, my dad rushed me to the ER, and it turns out, I tore the iris in my eye. I wore an eyepatch for a couple months, and ended up missing over half the baseball season. So, no scholarship, no minors, no MLB...I was devastated.

However, if I had gone to play baseball, I never would have truly answered the call in my heart for ministry. I thank God for that tree, even though at the time, I really hated that tree. We never know God's plan, but remember, it is always for the better.

Now hold that thought and let's go on to look at the passage in Romans a little closer... (Romans 11: 1-2a and 29-32)

Verse 1 says: Has God rejected his people? By no means! Verse 29 says, "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." God never revokes the gift of forgiveness nor the call to come to him. Verse 32 explains that God has consigned all to disobedience that he might have mercy on all. There is a universal NEED for salvation. He gave us over (that's what "consigned" means) to our freewill to obey or not to obey and we all chose the way of disobedience.

Both Jews and Gentiles sinned, missed opportunities, and perverted God's gifts. So even though the Jews may have thought they got mercy because they were God's favorite, they actually got effectively "sent to Egypt" and forgotten about for a while to prepare the way for other nations to receive God's word and accept Him. Paul says even their rejection of Jesus turned out well because it gave the Gentiles an opportunity to respond to God's mercy.

Now doesn't that sound like a New Testament parallel to Joseph's plight? And doesn't that sound like what Christ has done for us? For a while he was the favored one. Then he was the rejected one, and finally he was the one by which God saves many. God's purpose is always to save and restore. Our unfaithfulness never nullifies the faithfulness of God. His invitation is irrevocable! His grace is never withdrawn based upon what we do. But our response is what makes the difference in whether we receive mercy. If Joseph's brothers had heard about the provision available in Egypt but had never gone there to ask Joseph for it, they would have died.

Have you responded to God's invitation of mercy and pardon? He isn't holding any fault against you. He sent Jesus before you to preserve your life! God loves each one of us as if there were only one of us! Whoever you are and whatever you have done, when you come to Him this is what you can expect: Unfathomable forgiveness, an Irrevocable Invitation, and Inconceivable Compassion.

We see the same thing with Joseph and his brothers. Even after all his brothers did to him, he was still able to forgive, and to see that God needed

him to be on that path in order to save his family. Joseph tests his brothers and Judah pleads for Joseph to take him as the slave and not the youngest. And what did Joseph do? He tells them who he is and how he will save them.

Sometimes we find ourselves like Joseph's brothers and never realize it. We forget sometimes that we must go before God with everything that is going on in our lives and ask him for guidance and grace. But we must remember. He will always look after us. He will always forgive us, no matter who we are or what we have done. And we ourselves should do the same to others.

Now I'm not saying test people like Joseph did, but instead know that sometimes when people call for our forgiveness, they are the brothers of Joseph, and we are Joseph. Will you forgive them? Will you not hold a grudge? Joseph is the living example of what God calls for us to do when we are wronged. We are called to be like Joseph with unfathomable forgiveness. Let us do that...let us be like Joseph.