Mending Broken Relationships
Genesis 42:35-38; 46:28-30

Sermon Outline

A. Honesty is Required (vs. 35):

1. To be – Israel’s sons were continuously getting the sacks empty with no plan to stop until it was completed.
2. Pour out – Israel’s sons were busy emptying everything from their sacks.
3. Behold – It became suddenly very obvious what was in their sacks.
4. See – When Israel and his sons became fully aware that they money they were suppose to use to pay for the grain was in their sacks they knew they were in trouble.
5. Dismayed - Upon seeing the money they anticipated that harm would come upon them so they became fearful.
6. Dismayed – They kept telling Joseph they were honest men (42:11,19, 31-34).

B. Accountability is Necessary (vs. 36):

1. Jacob said – Upon seeing the money in the sacks Jacob immediately spoke up with no desire to stop saying what he felt.
2. Bereaved – Jacob was in a state of feeling childless as if under the divine judgment of God.
   a) Jacob blames the brothers for his bereavement (“deprived,” šākal), which explains why Reuben, the eldest son and presumably the most liable, makes his desperate proposal next (v. 37). Loss of children was the most woeful sorrow that a parent could experience in ancient Israel (e.g., Job 1:18–20; cf. 27:45; Lev 26:22). Here Jacob sounds despair, “Everything is against me!” but later sounds his impotence, “If I am bereaved, I am bereaved” (šākal, 43:14).[1]
3. Take – Jacob’s sons were seeking to continuously, with no end in sight, to permanently take Benjamin. He did not expect Benjamin to return because he believed that Joseph was dead.
4. **All these things** - Jacob felt as if his entire family was being taken from him. He felt that he had no one left. This is because he loved the children from Rachel more than Leah. He seems to act as if he believed that God was punishing him for this.

5. **Are** - Because Jacob’s son were continually seeking to get him to release Benjamin Jacob believed that everything was continuously and endlessly working against him.

6. **Said (vs. 37)** – Upon seeing the grief his father displayed Reuben spoke up and provided a possible solution.

   a) The only reference to Reuben's early childhood is his gathering of mandrakes for his mother (Gen 30:14). Years later, as the hatred of Jacob's sons for Joseph grew, it was Reuben who advised his brothers not to kill their younger brother. He suggested that they merely bind him, which would have allowed him to return later to release Joseph to his father (Gen 37:20-22). It also was Reuben who reminded his brothers that all their troubles and fears in Egypt were their just reward for mistreating Joseph (Gen 42:22).

7. **Said (vs. 37)** – Reuben knew they did not deserve their father’s trust.

8. **Two sons to death** – Reuben keep saying to Jacob that if he does not return Simeon and Benjamin, Jacob can execute Reuben’s sons.

9. **Put him; Given you** – Reuben commanded Jacob, since Reuben gave him his two sons, to hand over Benjamin for him to take care of from his heart. Reuben said he understood the generosity of the gift and therefore would exercise care for Benjamin from his heart.

10. **My care; Hands** – Reuben will personally use all the means that is within his authority and power to not allow any harm to come upon Benjamin.

11. **I will return him** – Reuben will continuously with no end in sight make sure that Benjamin comes back to his father.

C. **Core Issues Must be Addressed (vs. 38):**

1. **Jacob said** – Jacob spoke out in response to Reuben’s request and continually told him with no intention of changing what he was saying.

2. **Go down** – Jacob continually said, with no intent to stop saying, that Benjamin was not going to leave his place of security and put himself in a place of danger.

3. **His brother is dead** – Jacob was convinced that Joseph was dead.
This offer only raises Jacob’s suspicions further. Perhaps Joseph and Simeon have actually been killed by their brothers. He now explicitly refers to Joseph as “dead,” and by referring to him as “my son” and Benjamin as “his brother,” he effectively denies any fraternal relationship between the sons of Leah and the sons of Rachel. [2]

1. Benjamin alone is left - Benjamin is the only one who has escaped this situation that the brothers have become involved in. The brothers have to go back to Egypt, Simeon is in jail so only Benjamin is left.
   a) God forced Jacob to give up both of his special sons to gain his family back.
   b) Jacob should have known better because he knew that Esau was his father’s (Isaac) favorite but God chose him (Genesis 25:22-23; 27).

1. If harm is to befall him – If Benjamin was put in a position where he is completely set up to be confronted, military style, by people who are seeking to hurt him it would create extreme sorrow for Jacob.
2. You are taking – Where Benjamin can possibly be hurt is exact directly his brothers is continuously seeking to walk in.
3. Bring my gray hair down - Benjamin being harmed places Jacob is a completed set condition of brought down into sorrow. You don’t see the same pain for Simeon.
4. Sorrow – Jacob will experience mental stress so that he experiences emotional duress.

1. Sheol – The emotional duress that Jacob experiences would create such pressure on him it would cause him to die.

D. Healthy Character Traits Mend Broken Relationships (Genesis 46:28-29):

1. He sent Judah before:
   a) He chose Judah to go forward in advance of the company (sent Judah before him ... to direct his face unto Goshen, AV), to meet Joseph and complete the arrangements for their entrance into the land.
   b) Judah is the one who sold him to the Ishmaelites (37:26).
   c) From this point on, Judah became the spokesman for his brothers (vs. 8-10; 44:14-34; 46:28).
1. **To point out** – Jacob wanted to make sure that the way they were going is established and focused for the 76 people that were with him because this issue is in his face (before him) - connotation of aiming or controlling.

2. **They came** – To arrive in Goshen which was a fulfillment of God’s promise – they came with purpose (bring) and did not stop until it was filled - Used with reference to the man who comes to the sanctuary in company with his community in order to pray and bring sacrifices.

3. **They came** – God is always in control no matter how broken relationships can become.

4. **Went up** – It did not matter how difficult it is to travel Joseph went from a lower elevation to a higher elevation to meet his father.

5. **Appeared** – Joseph intelligently inspect all the people before in search of his father because that was what mattered most based on the message he received - To intelligently inspect something in an effort to come to an understanding and accept the message sent by God.

6. **Fell** – Because of everyone’s behavior a family is reunited.

7. **Fell** – Joseph threw himself down on his face – as prince of all Egypt Joseph placed himself into the hands of his father.

   a) The last time Joseph saw his father was when Joseph was 17 (37:2). Jacob was satisfied to see his son alive, for he was the one designated as the heir, the one whom God had chosen to rule over the family. So this was more than a family reunion; it was a confirmation that God’s promised blessing was intact. [3]

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1. **Wept** - To complaint really loud. A very strong outward emotion of grief. It is a very strong display of distress. There is obviously nothing wrong with a grown man crying – Joseph (as prince with all his attire and his princely chariot) did not cry he wept, not once several times and God made sure it is recorded. Jacob did not cry – he seems to be still in shock but was willing to die now. This could be as much as 20 years later; 20 years of mourning someone who is alive.

2. **A long time** –Joseph could not stop crying. The pain of the pass was still real.

3. **A long time** – Has a sense of repetition and permanence – a continuation of a pass and present event – Joseph had no time in his mind to stop crying. He did not care who was looking (76 people are watching), he loved and missed his father so much that all he could do was cry.

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**E. Love Covers a Multitude of Sins (Genesis 46:30):**

1. **Said** – The basic idea is the uttering of some type of spoken word – Israel could also been thinking within oneself with the intention to do something.
2. **Die** – What Jacob was saying is that if someone was to kill him, execution style, it was good because he had finally seen his son – Jacob lived with the purpose of hopefully one he will see his son.

1. **Seen** – What Israel is saying is that he has carefully and cognitively checked Joseph out (Joseph was most likely in all his Egyptian clothes) and Joseph is truly Joseph.

2. **Before** – The person standing in his face is truly Joseph.

3. **Before** – The pain of the pass is restored with joy.

4. **Alive** – Jacob has seen that Joseph is living in good health, doing good and prospering.

5. **Joseph says** – Joseph’s heart of forgives establishes the family (Genesis 45:4-15; 46:30-34).

6. **Joseph says** – Joseph’s love for God establishes God’s vision for His people.

7. **Joseph says** – Joseph’s love for God mends all relationships.