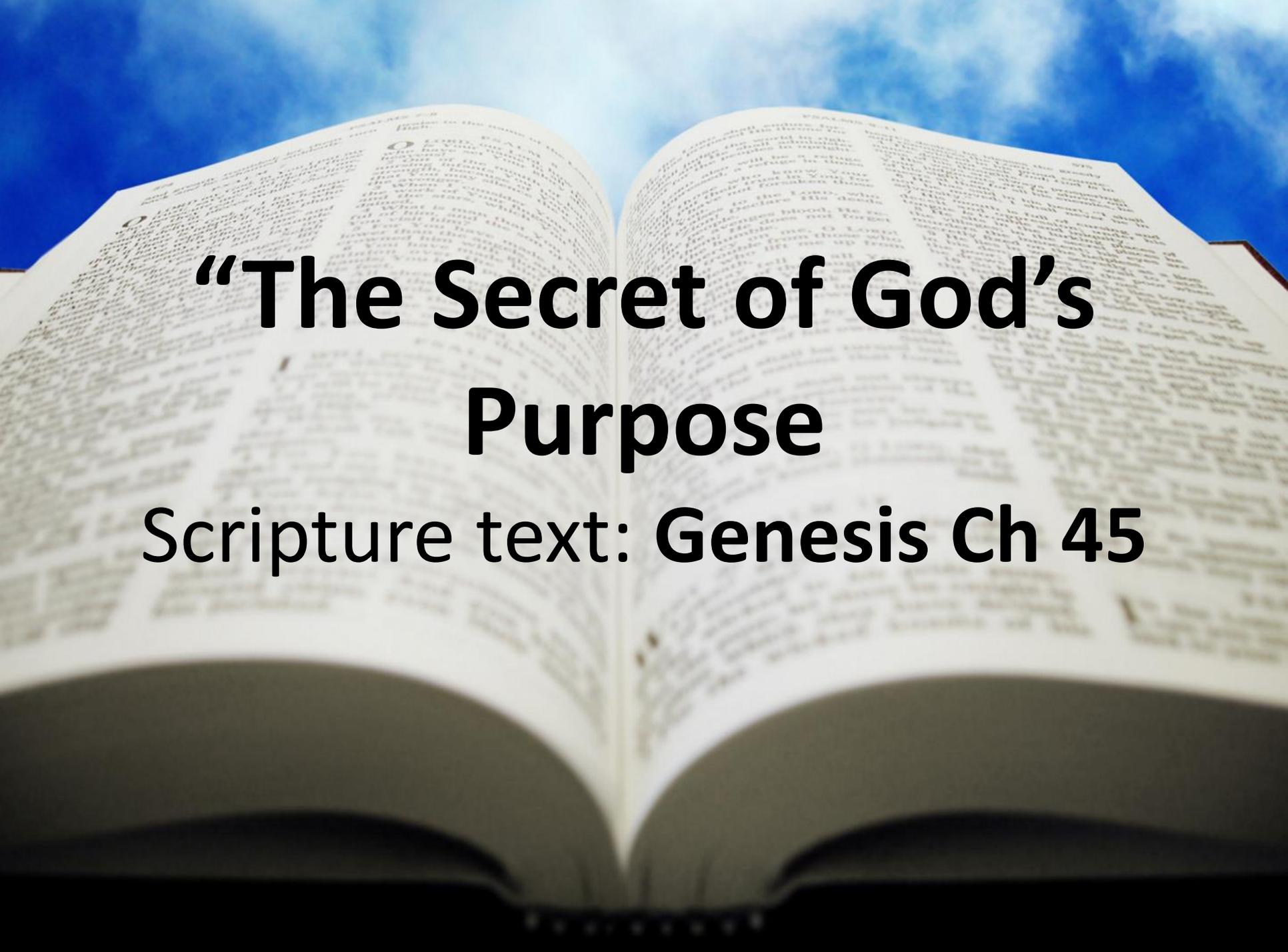


Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, but it is out of focus. The background is a bright blue sky with some white clouds. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

“The Secret of God’s Purpose

Scripture text: Genesis Ch 45

Genesis 45:1-3 Then 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**. And he **wept aloud**, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. And 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**.

It was now time for Joseph to reveal himself and the purpose for which God had sent him. Acts 7:13 makes it clear that it was “the second time” that he revealed himself, just as it was the second time that Israel received Moses after rejecting his leadership forty years before (Acts 7:35). This is the theme of Stephen’s speech recorded in Acts 7: **the chosen people Israel have always rejected their saviors the first time and received them the second time; they will do the same with Jesus Christ.**

Act 7:11-16 Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and **our fathers could find no food**. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first visit. And **on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers**, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. And **Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all**. And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers, and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

Act 7:34-37 I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.' **"This Moses, whom they rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?'--this man God sent as both ruler and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush.** This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in Egypt and at the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years. This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.'

Verses 1–8. With a burst of emotion Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. This (v. 2) was the third of five times he wept over his brothers (42:24; 43:30; 45:14; 50:17; cf. 50:1). **They were stunned by the news, unable to speak for fear that Joseph might kill them.** In this passage strong feelings and sound spiritual judgment and argument **complete the work of reconciliation** which till now **had called for severe testing.** It had been the task for a wise man, and over an extended period of time Joseph accomplished the task marvelously.

1 Peter 4:12-16 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. **Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.**

Romans 5:1-5 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.** Through him we have also **obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand,** and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. More than that, **we rejoice in our sufferings,** knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and **hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit** who has been given to us.

2 Corinthians 2:5-11 Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure--not to put it too severely--to all of you. For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. For this is why I wrote, **that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything.** Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

Joseph explained that **God had sovereignly brought him to Egypt to prepare for their deliverance from famine.** His words form a classic statement on **providential control.** God sent me ahead of you (45:5). It was not you who sent me here, but God (v. 8; cf. v. 9). **The certainty that God's will, not man's, is the controlling reality in every event shined through as the basis for reconciliation.** No doubt Joseph had consoled himself many times with this principle of faith. **He who is spiritual can perceive the hand of God in every event, and therefore is able to forgive those who wrong him.**

Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. **The Lord is at hand;** do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And **the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, **think about these things.**

Verses 9–13. Joseph then instructed his brothers **to hurry back without delay** (cf. quickly in v. 13 and cf. 43:15) to Jacob and inform him of Joseph’s power (as “**ruler of all Egypt,**” 45:8, and lord of all Egypt, v. 9) and honor in all the land of Egypt (vv. 9, 13). **The whole family must move to Egypt and live in the region of Goshen,** a fertile area in the Nile Delta (cf. comments on 47:1–12), to dwell under Joseph’s rule, **because God had prepared the way** through all the circumstances.

Verses 14–15.

Finally the brothers were reunited, first Joseph and Benjamin, then all of them. Those were emotion-filled moments, filled with weeping (cf. 42:24; 43:30; 45:2) and then conversation.

Their previous hatred and jealousy of Joseph (37:4, 8, 11) was now gone.

Joseph's revelation of himself brought his brothers terror, for they fully expected him to judge them for their past sins. **But he had seen their repentance;** they had bowed before him; and **he knew he could forgive them.**

He explained that five more years of famine would follow, but that **he had prepared a place of refuge for them and their families there in Egypt.** God had sent him before to save their lives.

Joseph promised to nourish them (v. 11) and protect them. He wept over them and kissed them, and he sent gifts to his father to assure him of the riches that lay in Egypt. **“Come unto me!”** was his invitation (45:18). Then, what a change took place in Jacob after he discovered that Joseph was alive—a **change not too different from the change in the disciples when they discovered that Christ was alive!** Before, Jacob had said, “All these things are against me (42:36), but now he could say, “All things are working together for good!”

Genesis 45:16-20 When the report was heard in Pharaoh's house, "Joseph's brothers have come," it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, '**Do this: load your beasts and go back to the land of Canaan, and take your father and your households, and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you shall eat the fat of the land.**' And you, Joseph, are commanded to say, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Have no concern for your goods, **for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.**'"

Genesis 45:21-23 The sons of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the command of Pharaoh, and **gave them provisions for the journey.** To each and all of them he gave a change of clothes, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five changes of clothes. **To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey.**

Romans 8:27-31 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. **And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. **What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?**

Genesis 45:24-28 Then he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, "**Do not quarrel on the way.**" So they went up out of Egypt and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. And they told him, "**Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.**" And his heart became numb, **for he did not believe them.** But when they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them, and **when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him,** the spirit of their father Jacob revived. And Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

John 20:25-29 So the other disciples told him, "**We have seen the Lord.**" But he said to them, "**Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.**" Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "**Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.**" Thomas answered him, "**My Lord and my God!**" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Luke 24:6-12 He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." And **they remembered his words**, and returning from the tomb **they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest**. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, but **these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them**. But **Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened**.