

Christ, The Second Joseph, Lives.

Text: Gen 45:25-28

Suggested Hymns:

88, 95, 103, 101, 91

1) We Know That Christ, The Second Joseph, Lives

2) This Is Enough for Every Christian

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Genesis 45:25–28, ²⁵ *Then they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father.* ²⁶ *And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.” And Jacob’s heart stood still, because he did not believe them.*

²⁷ *But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived.* ²⁸ *Then Israel said, “It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Seasons of joy frequently follow times of great sadness. When after a severe cyclone the bright rays of the sun begin to penetrate the dark and ominous clouds; when after a bloodstained conflict the long-expected day of peace arrives; when after a prolonged epidemic, in which thousands lost their lives, and the public quarantine is lifted; then supreme joy reigns in the hearts of many.

A similar, though much greater, joy reigns in the hearts, homes, and churches of Christendom today because the dark night of humiliation has passed for our Lord and Saviour, and He appears before us in the brightness of His celestial glory.

The long, bitter, and bloodstained war is now over for the Lord. The grave could not hold Him. He has broken the fetters of death. He lives and lives in all eternity.

A dark night of sorrow had once descended upon the patriarch Jacob. God in His all-wise counsel had imposed a heavy cross on him. In a mysterious manner his beloved son Joseph was taken from him, and the deepest night of gloom engulfed his soul.

But this dark night was suddenly transformed into the brightest day when his sons brought him the glad tidings, ***“Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.”*** Then all gloom and sadness disappeared, and the aged Jacob could rejoice, ***“It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”***

These words of Jacob contain an appropriate Easter message. They express the sentiment of every Christian on Easter morning. We, too, will exclaim with Jacob today, *It Is Enough, Christ, the Second Joseph, Lives!* May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. We Know That Christ, The Second Joseph, Lives

Our text relates the story of Joseph’s brothers, having returned from their last journey to Egypt. They had been sent there by their father to buy food, to save themselves from the great famine in the land of Canaan and the surrounding countries. Immediately after their return they informed their father, ***“Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.”***

Many years prior to this event, Jacob had sent his darling son Joseph out into the field to look after the welfare of his brothers, who were tending their father’s flocks. When Joseph arrived, they robbed him of his clothing, threw him into a pit, and later sold him to a company of Midianites for twenty pieces of silver.

Joseph was hated by his brothers because he was an obedient son of his father and revealed their evil deeds to him. Joseph, the pious young man, must suffer, is hated and persecuted on account of his willing obedience.

The loss of Joseph, whom he believed dead, caused Jacob the greatest sorrow, so that he would not be comforted. He felt convinced that a wild beast had torn Joseph in pieces, for his brothers had dipped his coat of many colours in blood and sent it to their father.

Joseph now was as good as buried for Jacob. In fact, this was Jacob's Good Friday. And as time went on and no further news was heard of the whereabouts of Joseph, his wicked brothers also felt certain that Joseph was dead.

Joseph appears here in his suffering as a type of Christ, the Righteous Servant of Jehovah. Christ, the second Joseph, was the beloved Son of His heavenly Father. He was sent into the world to look after the spiritual welfare of His brethren, the whole human race.

But Jesus was given no better reception from His brethren than Joseph. We read in John 1:11, *"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.* From His earliest infancy He was hated by His own countrymen. While He still nestled on His mother's breast, He had to flee from wicked King Herod. And when at the age of 30 He began His public ministry in the land of Palestine as the Redeemer of His race, seeking the welfare of His own people, He was hated and persecuted.

His own brethren according to the flesh, especially the leaders of the people, constantly plotted against Him. In the waning hours of His life, one of the select band of the Twelve, one very near and dear to Him, Judas, the faithless disciple, betrayed and sold Him for 30 pieces of silver.

Then Jesus was captured, mocked, and reviled, scourged, and crowned with thorns, and finally, as a curse, nailed to the accursed tree of the Cross. Thus His own brethren became the murderers of this Righteous Servant of the Lord.

The hymnist wrote,¹

God's Son, the righteous, here must die in sadness:
Man, the transgressor, now may live in gladness;
Man's life was forfeit, yet he is acquitted —
God is committed.

But just as through the wicked plans of Joseph's brothers, so here the good and gracious will of God was to be carried into effect. The first Joseph, sold to the Midianites, had to suffer still more. Carried into Egypt by the merchantmen, he was sold a second time to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard.

Faithful and conscientious in the performance of his duties, the handsome young man was tempted by the passionate wife of his master. She tried repeatedly to lure him into a life of impurity. But Joseph remained untainted.

One day, however, when her husband was absent, she tried again to mislead him. Then Joseph fled from her presence.

But because of his innocence he had to suffer. When Potiphar returned, she accused Joseph as the seducer. Potiphar had Joseph put into the king's prison. In prison we find him in the midst of two other prisoners. But God was with him in prison also. Soon the keeper of the prison made him overseer over all the prisoners. As a matter of fact, just this incident in his life that he was numbered with the transgressors later served as a means to bring about his exaltation.

Also in this respect the first Joseph was a type of the second Joseph, Christ Jesus, our Lord. Christ also endured shame and humiliation, although He ***“committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth.”***² In the prison of hell Jesus endured the greatest punishment, the agony of God-forsakenness, the tortures of the damned.

On the tree of the Cross Jesus hung between two malefactors, and thus was numbered with the transgressors. Jesus endured much more than the first Joseph for He bore the sin and guilt and punishment of a world lost to sin, including Joseph's sin. He was not only forsaken by man as Joseph, but also by God, and died at last the shameful death on the Cross. But as the acquaintance of the first Joseph with a prison proved a means for his exaltation, just so the shame and disgrace of the second Joseph led to His exaltation, and in the end brought about the salvation of the whole world.

The first Joseph was finally exalted. After his years of shame and humiliation in the king's prison, Pharaoh made him ruler over the whole land of Egypt. Through shame and suffering he rose to royal honour and glory. And this is the good news, contained in our text, which the brothers of Joseph brought to their aged father, saying, ***“Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.”***

This same message of joy was brought on the first Easter morning to the frightened women at the Empty Tomb by an angel who said to them as recorded in Matthew 28:5-6, ***“Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.*** This joyous theme soon resounded from the lips of all the disciples

The hymnist expressed it this way,³

He is risen, He is risen!
Tell it with a joyful voice;
He has burst His three days' prison.
Let the whole wide world rejoice.
Death is conquered, man is free,
Christ has won the victory.

Oh, how happy they could be that Jesus was again in their midst! Now they could shout for joy: *“Jesus lives, whom we thought dead. He has conquered all His and our enemies. The grave could not hold Him. He is highly exalted over all.”*

A similar song of praise of victory is heard from the lips of all Christians today. They sing and say: *“Jesus, the second Joseph, lives. He is highly exalted over all His foes. He has gained a glorious victory over sin, death, devil, and hell. The dominion of sin is broken, the devil is conquered, death with its terrors cannot make us afraid, and the dark prison house of hell is sealed for us.”*

Scripture tells us in Romans 4:25 that Jesus ***was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised for our justification.***

To be sure, the second Joseph lives and reigns at the right hand of God forevermore. Now we join in the happy Easter hymn,⁴

I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence, gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living head.

Truly, here is one greater than Joseph! Since Christ has accomplished the work of redemption, we join the aged Jacob in saying: ***“It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”***

2. This Is Enough for Every Christian

When the sons of Jacob returned from Egypt and related to their father that Joseph was still alive, ***Jacob’s heart stood still, because he did not believe them.*** The aged Jacob shakes his head in unbelief and says as much as: *“Your report*

cannot be true. My son Joseph perished in the wilderness; he was torn in pieces by a wild animal.”

27 But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. 28 Then Israel said, “It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

It goes without saying that the brothers of Joseph now confessed their former sins to their father, telling him how they had sold Joseph into slavery many years ago and how under the guiding hand of the Lord their wicked deed was overruled for their own good, making Joseph the governor over the whole land of Egypt. They repeated to him all the words Joseph had spoken to them.

But when Jacob still doubted their report, they showed him the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him to Egypt. When Jacob saw this tangible evidence, his spirit revived, and he exclaimed: ***“It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”***

This was Jacob’s Easter morning. Now his heart rejoiced and could no longer be sad. Now he cherished the fond hope of seeing with his own eyes the son whom he had believed dead. And when not long after he clasped his beloved Joseph to his bosom, he said to him, as written in Genesis 46:30, ***“Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive.”*** And not many years after the aged patriarch departed this life in peace.

When the bewildered women and other disciples came to the Empty Tomb of the Saviour early on Easter Day, they were downcast and sad. They firmly believed that Jesus was to redeem Israel, and now He had died the shameful death on the Cross. When, therefore, the angel in the sepulchre informed them that Jesus had risen from the dead, as He had declared to them repeatedly, they refused to accept this glad tidings. Yes, many of them doubted it for a long time after His resurrection.

It was only after many appearances of the risen Lord that the scales fell from their eyes. Then they realised how foolish they had been not to believe all that the Prophets had spoken, that Christ must suffer all these things to redeem them and then enter into glory.

Now new courage filled their hearts, and their doubts vanished. Now they harboured the joyous hope someday to dwell with Jesus in heaven. With firm conviction in their hearts they could join the aged Jacob in his Easter hymn and say: *“We have enough! Jesus, the second Joseph, lives. He has fully redeemed us, and when our final hour comes, He will take us to Himself in heaven.”* Assured of this divine comfort and certain hope, they gladly left this vale of tears.

The resurrection of Christ also gives us the sweetest comfort and the most substantial hope. As Christians we know that Jesus, our Saviour, lives, because Scripture confirms it in numerous passages. If doubts want to enter our hearts, we take our Bibles and read the Scripture proofs in the Gospels and Epistles. That is the cart of Joseph which helps us dispel all our doubts. There we see Jesus the risen Lord with the eyes of faith.

Yes, a day is coming when we shall see Jesus, the second Joseph, face to face, as Jacob saw the first Joseph in Egypt. Then we can say with Jacob, as written in Job 19:25–27, ²⁵ *For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth;* ²⁶ *And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God,* ²⁷ *Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!*⁵

Indeed, our fondest hope is to see the risen Lord face to face. Then our faith will turn into sight. The risen Lord will raise our dead bodies on the Last Day and fashion them like His glorious body. Then the believers will live forever, body and soul. Christ has promised this, saying in John 14:19, *Because I live, you will live also.* Accordingly, we sing with Jacob of old: *“It is enough! I will go and see Jesus, the second Joseph, when I die; see Him with my human eyes in the heavenly kingdom to rejoice with Him forever.”*

Oh, how happy the Christian is on Easter Day! He need fear nothing now. Jesus has redeemed him. He has seen the risen Lord with the eyes of faith as the mighty Conqueror over all his foes. He is firmly convinced that His living Redeemer wants to draw him to Himself in heaven. Nothing will sever him from this second Joseph. His faith in this risen Lord is, so to say, the cart of Joseph on which he will ascend into heaven in his final hour.

And so he sings on this Easter Day:⁶

Jesus lives! thy terrors now

Can, O death, no more appal us;
Jesus lives! by this we know
Thou, O grave, canst not enthrall us.
Hallelujah! Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Hymn 55 v 4

² 1 Pet. 2:22

³ Hymn 95

⁴ Hymn 103

⁵ Job. 19:25-27

⁶ Hymn 101