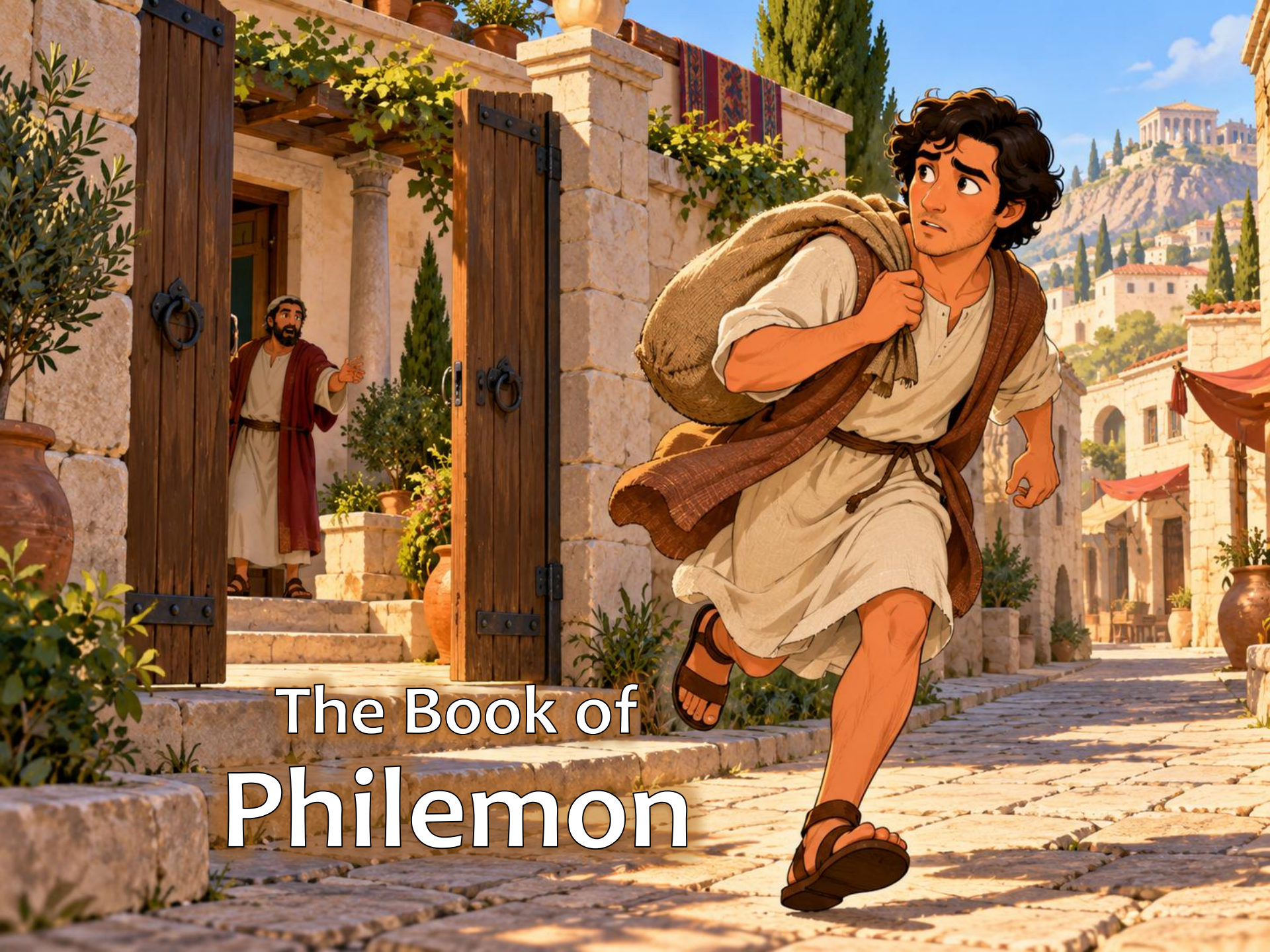
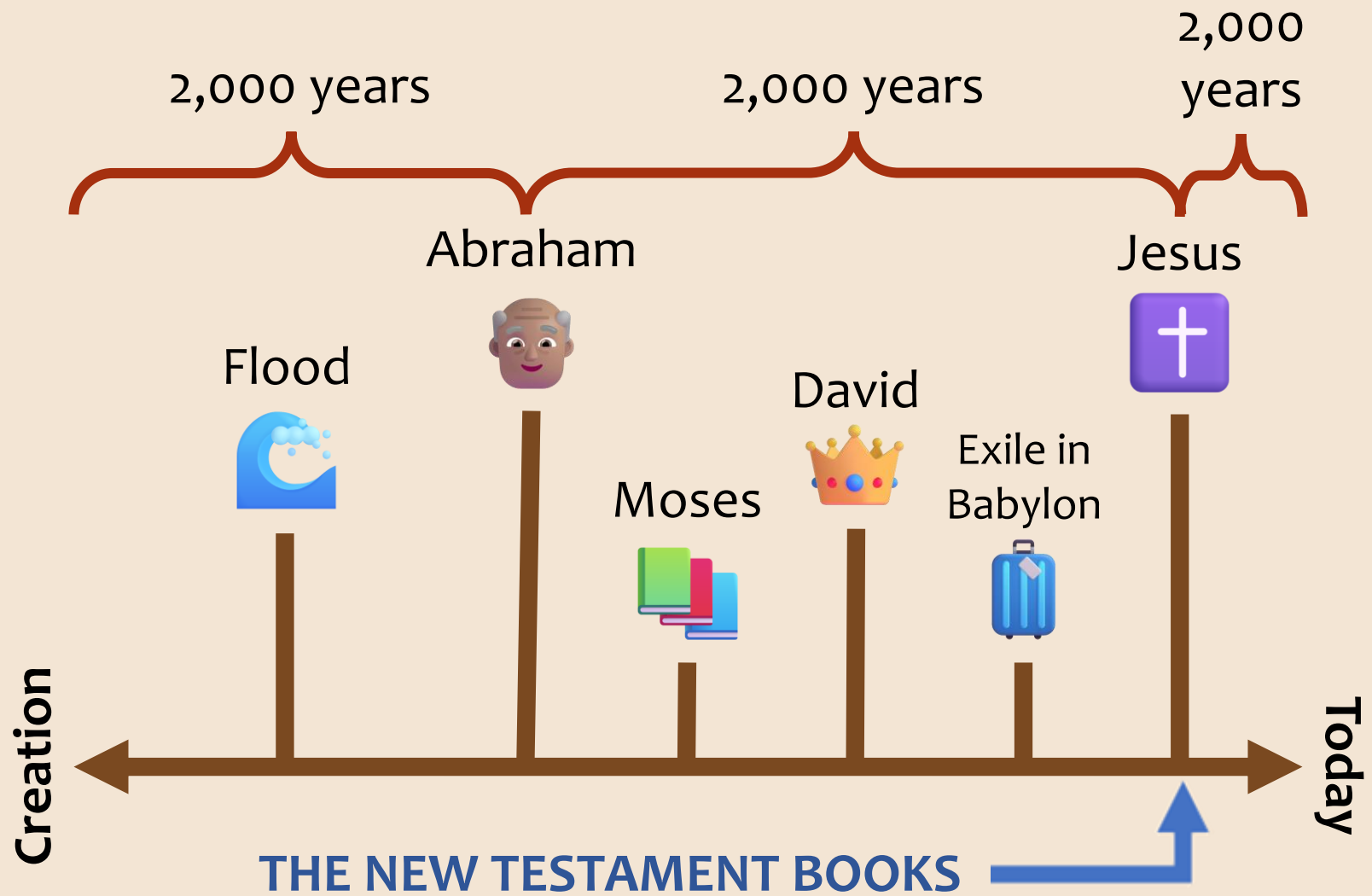


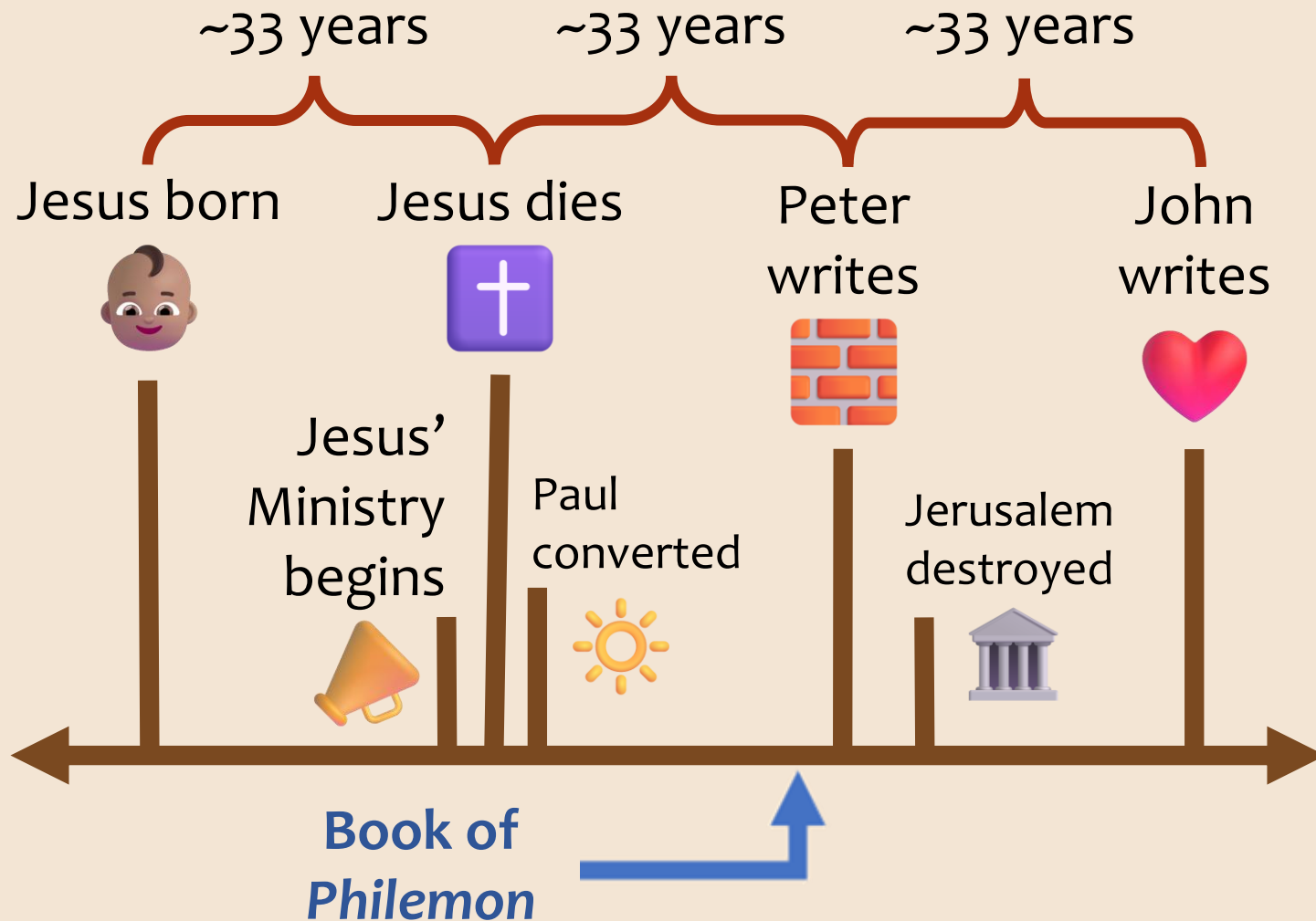
An illustration of a man with dark, curly hair running down a cobblestone street. He is wearing a light-colored tunic and sandals, with a large, full sack slung over his shoulder. He has a look of urgency or fear. In the background, a man with a beard and a red robe stands in a doorway, gesturing towards the runner. The setting is a sunlit ancient town with stone buildings, potted plants, and a temple on a hill in the distance.

The Book of Philemon

Bible timeline



Bible timeline



Summary

Philemon

- **Paul wants Philemon, the owner of a slave named Onesimus, to forgive whatever happened.**
 - Philemon is a believer (v. 1), and Onesimus was converted because of Paul (v. 10; Col. 4:9)
 - Paul wants Philemon to welcome Onesimus back “no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother” (v. 16 NASB).
- It seems...
 - Onesimus ran away from Philemon
 - Onesimus owes money to Philemon
 - Paul may be goading Philemon into freeing Onesimus
- And we wonder things like:
 - How did Onesimus meet Paul?
 - How did Onesimus travel so far?



Why *Philemon* is special

- It really tackles slavery head-on in the New Covenant:
 - The slave and the master are both Christians, so we don't get to objectify one or the other as the bad guy or ignore their struggles.
 - Yet this book also does not ever command that the slave go free, or that the master was wrong to own a slave.



Main characters

-  **Philemon**
 - Owner of Onesimus
 - A believer with a church in his house (**v. 2**)
-  **Onesimus**
 - Slave
 - A believer
 - With Paul – somehow – and not with Philemon
 - Home is likely Colossae (**Colossians 4:9, 17**) – note Archippus is mentioned also
-  **Paul**
 - Apostle in prison (**v. 13**)

Outline of *Philemon*

(With Paul saying these things)

- Vs. 1-7: You are a great guy, Philemon
- Vs. 8-16: Please welcome back Onesimus
- Vs. 17-21: I'll make good on his debt, but you do owe me... everything
- Vs. 22-25: Concluding good-byes

Theology and doctrine

- The Bible consistently treats slaves as human beings with inherent dignity.
 - **Job 31:13-15** – Job knows God could not forgive if Job mistreated his servants, since God created them both equally.
 - **Exodus 21:16** – Stealing a person to sell him was sin
 - **1 Timothy 1:9-10** – “menstealers” (KJV) condemned next to murderers and homosexuals
 - **Exodus 21:26-27** – Injuring an eye or losing a tooth meant setting the slave free
 - **Exodus 20:10** – Slaves must rest on the Sabbath, too
 - **Deuteronomy 15:12-15** – Debt slavery was capped at 6 years, and then the slave was to be given possessions “liberally”

Recap of *Philemon*

- **Summary**

- Paul wants Philemon, the owner of a slave named Onesimus, to forgive whatever happened.

- **Why it is special**

- It really tackles slavery head-on in the New Covenant

- **Main characters**

- Philemon (owner)
- Onesimus (slave)
- Paul

- **Outline**

- **Vs. 1-7:** You are a great guy, Philemon
- **Vs. 8-16:** Please welcome back Onesimus
- **Vs. 17-21:** I'll make good on his debt, but you do owe me... everything
- **Vs. 22-25:** Concluding good-byes

- **Theology and doctrine**

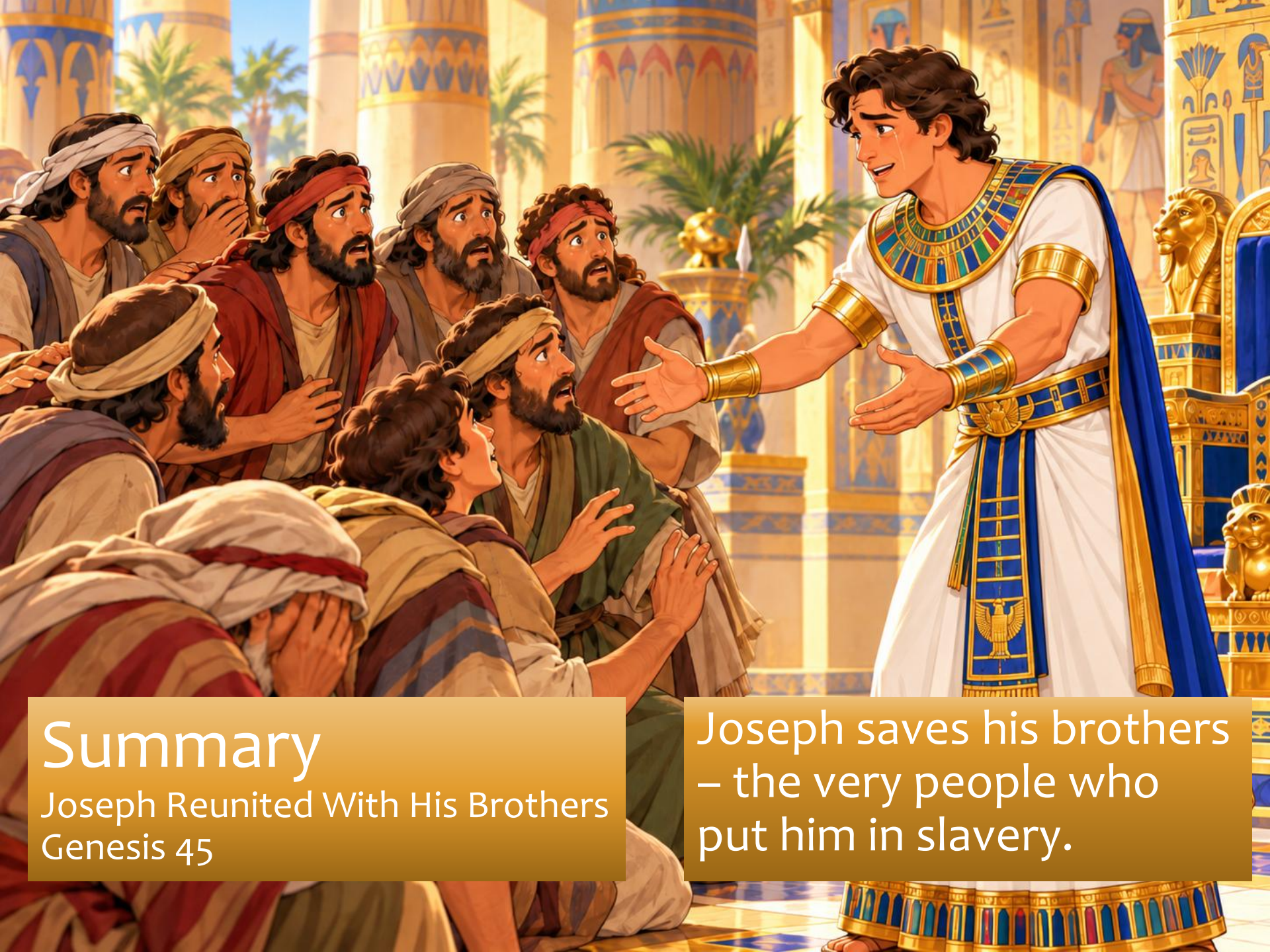
- The Bible consistently treats slaves as human beings with inherent dignity.
(**Job 31:13-15**)



Joseph Reunited With His Brothers

Genesis 45



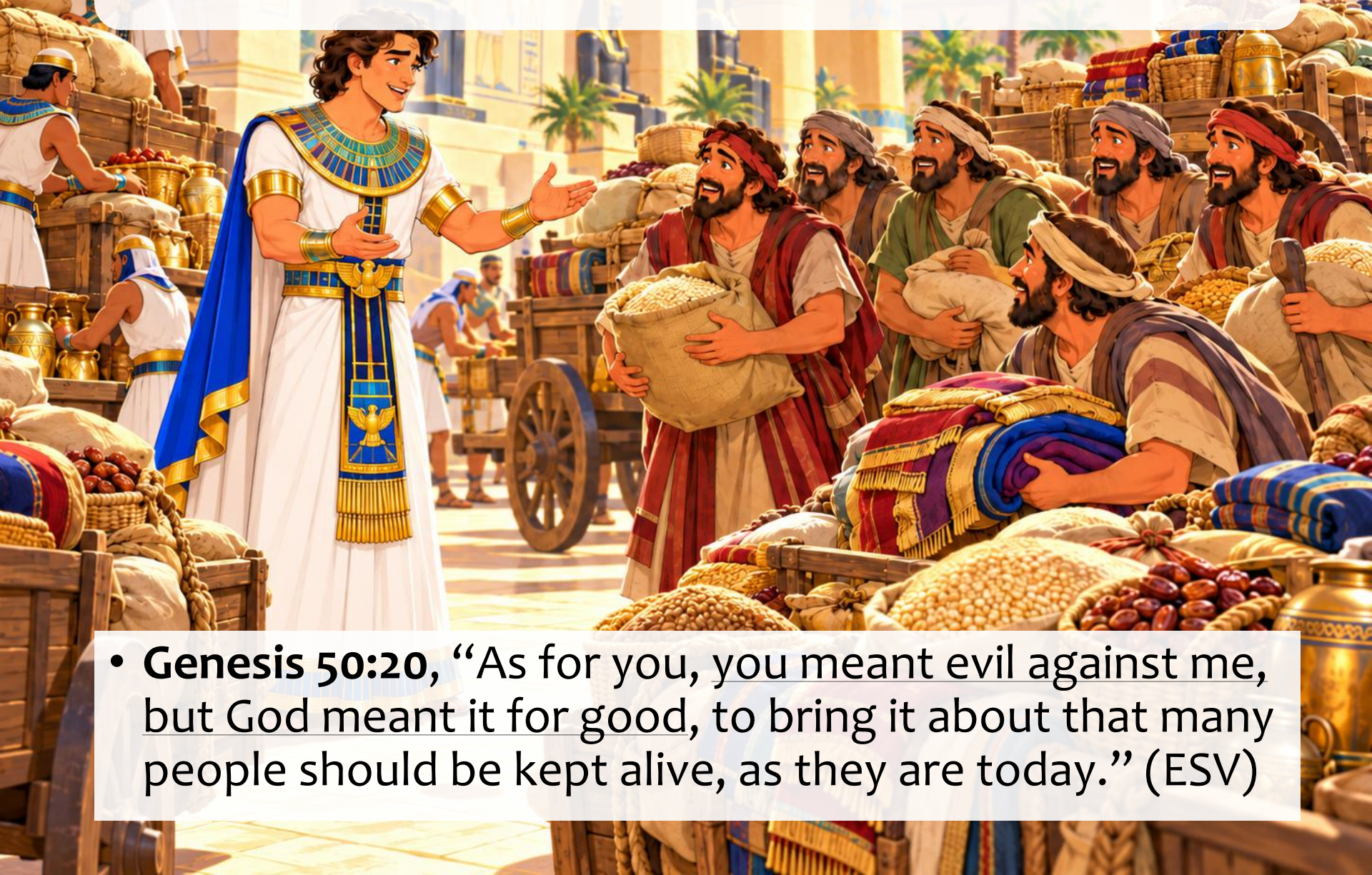


Summary

Joseph Reunited With His Brothers
Genesis 45

Joseph saves his brothers
– the very people who
put him in slavery.

Why this story is special



- **Genesis 50:20**, “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.” (ESV)

Main characters

-  **Joseph**
 - Dad's favorite son (**Genesis 37:3**)
 - Brothers were jealous (**Genesis 37:11**) and sold him in slavery (**Genesis 37:27**)
 - “Lord of all Egypt” (**verse 9**; see **Genesis 41**)
-  **Joseph's 11 brothers**
 - Benjamin is Joseph's full brother (not half brother)
-  **Jacob/Israel**
 - Father of Joseph and the 11
-  **Pharaoh**
 - Welcomes the extended family of Joseph

Outline of *Genesis 45*

1. **Vs. 1-4:** After toying with them for 3 chapters, Joseph finally reveals to his brothers who he is
2. **Vs. 5-8:** God helped Joseph prepare Egypt for a famine so that the Israelites could stay alive
3. **Vs. 9-13:** Joseph instructs the brothers
4. **Vs. 14-15:** They cry it out
5. **Vs. 16-23:** Pharaoh is VERY supportive
6. **Vs. 24-28:** Jacob/Israel is told about it all

In case you missed it

It's been 22 years

- Joseph was 17 when sold (**Genesis 37:2**)
- Joseph was 30 when he became ruler (**Genesis 41:46**)
- This was followed by 7 years of plenty (**Gen. 41:47-48**) and 2 years of famine till this point (**Genesis 45:6**)
- That makes Joseph 39 here
- Joseph gets 17 more years with his father (**Gen. 47:28**)

- FYI, Benjamin was at most 11 years old when Joseph was sold (**Genesis 30:22-25, 31:41, 35:16-20**) and maybe even younger – so he may be fairly innocent in the sin

In case you missed it

It's very personal

- Joseph demands to be alone with just his brothers when he reveals his secret (**v. 1**)
- He weeps loud enough that people far away hear it (**v. 2**)
- He doesn't want the brothers to beat themselves up (**v. 5**)
- Benjamin must have been the closest to Joseph (**v. 14**)
- Pharaoh tells Joseph to take what he needs (**v. 20**)
- Joseph tells the brothers not to argue on the trip back to Jacob (**v. 24**) – he knows how people are.
- Jacob was shocked (**v. 26**)

Theology and doctrine

Judah's change of heart

- All 11 brothers are guilty of betraying Joseph in **Genesis 37**, but **only Reuben and Judah are mentioned by name**, specifically because they insist on not murdering Joseph – “only” selling him.
- **Genesis 37-45** is entirely about Joseph... except for **chapter 38**
- **Genesis 38** is the story of *Judah and Tamar*; why on earth does this interrupt the Joseph chronicles? Because it seems to illustrate Judah's comeuppance:
 - Judah sins and is deceived by his daughter-in-law, Tamar
 - Joseph's brothers (including Judah) offer Joseph's bloody robe as proof to their father that he is dead
 - Tamar offers Judah's 'signet, cords, and staff' as evidence against him
 - Judah admits he was wrong
- Right before Joseph breaks down in tears (**45:1-2**), Judah has offered to be Joseph's slave in place of Benjamin (**44:33-34**)
- Judah is well-blessed by Jacob in **Genesis 49:8-12**
 - Judah's blessing (“*your father's sons shall bow down before you,*” ESV) sounds a lot like Joseph's dream that started all of this (**Gen. 37:6-10**)

Recap of Genesis 45

- **Summary**

- Joseph saves his brothers – the very people who put him in slavery

- **Why it is special**

- **Genesis 50:20** (ESV),
“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good...”

- **Main characters**

- Joseph
- Joseph’s 11 brothers
- Jacob/Israel
- Pharaoh

- **Outline**

1. **Vs. 1-4:** Joseph finally reveals to his brothers who he is
2. **Vs. 5-8:** God helped Joseph prepare Egypt for a famine so that the Israelites could stay alive
3. **Vs. 9-13:** Joseph instructs the brothers
4. **Vs. 14-15:** They cry it out
5. **Vs. 16-23:** Pharaoh is VERY supportive
6. **Vs. 24-28:** Jacob/Israel is told about it all

- **In case you missed it**

- It’s been 22 years
- It’s very personal

- **Theology and doctrine**

- Judah’s change of heart
 - Plotting in **Genesis 37**
 - Sacrifices himself in **Gen. 44:33-34**
 - Blessed in **Genesis 49:8-12**

Poem: Psalm 103

The LORD wants to remove our sins

- About God's mercy and forgiveness
- The song "10,000 Reasons" echoes this
 - "Bless the Lord, O my soul" (quotes verse 1)
 - "rich and love and... slow to anger" (verse 8)
 - "your heart is kind" (vs. 13, 17)
- Outline
 - **Vs. 1-5:** The LORD heals
 - **Vs. 6-9:** The LORD has mercy, and is slow to anger
 - **Vs. 10-14:** The LORD forgets sin and remembers his children
 - **Vs. 15-19:** Men are temporary; the LORD is forever
 - **Vs. 20-22:** Heavenly beings bless the LORD (and everything, everywhere)