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Saenz, Tomas (2015) Narrative preaching: with reference to Gen. 44:18-34 and 45:1-8 in the context of the Peruvian church. MTh(R) thesis.

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**NARRATIVE PREACHING: WITH REFERENCE TO
GEN. 44:18-34 AND 45:1-8 IN THE CONTEXT OF THE
PERUVIAN CHURCH**

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Theology**

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November 2014

ABSTRACT

This thesis researches narrative preaching. It is motivated by the little or no use this kind of preaching among biblical preachers in Peru. The aim is encourage Peruvian ministers to add in their homiletic repertoire this kind of preaching. The research was done by means of two procedures: bibliographic and field research. The bibliographic research studies were on three topics: the opinion by ten academics about the Joseph story, a close reading of two pericopes: Gen 44:18-34 and 45:1-8 and finally a literary analysis of these pericopes. This bibliographic research is the theoretical basis for then producing a narrative sermon. The field research was done through focus groups with some Peruvian church ministers, in order to obtain the Peruvian contextualized material for the sermon. The field research is the practical and contextual basis of the narrative sermon. So the sermon is the result of both bibliographic and field researches. The focus groups examined the dysfunctional family in the context of the Peruvian churches. This issue of the dysfunctional family was chosen from the bibliographic research to concentrate on a serious problem in Peruvian churches. The Joseph story is suitable to address this problem in a sermon. This thesis shows the use of the rhetoric of biblical narrative and its application to biblical preaching. This method of preaching must be added to homiletic repertoire of preachers in Peru so that they have variety in their preaching, and also so that preachers follow the biblical rhetoric.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have much gratitude to the Lord, many people and institutions who helped me to make this thesis possible. For this reason I want to express my acknowledgment to them.

First of all, I want to thank the Lord who made possible this study scholarship for the thesis and its culmination. His grace was abundant to me.

My gratitude to the Macleod Memorial Fund who supported my studies in the Theological Seminary of Edinburgh, to my supervisor Dr. David Ford without whose encouragement, guidance and patience it would have been difficult to complete, and to Dr. David Jasper whose opinion was accurate and timely.

Besides this there is my appreciation to the Seminario Evangelico de Lima in Peru and its Principal Dr. Donald Smith who was always encouraging me.

Furthermore, my thankfulness to my beloved wife who was accompanied me during the long hours of study, and to my family for their encouragement.

INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose and development of the thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to make a literary study of the biblical narrative and to show how it can be preached through using the narrative itself. I will attempt to fulfil this purpose through two particular crucial pericopes in the Joseph story will be considered, Gen 44:18-34 and 45:1-8 and the sermon developed from these passages will be shown to be appropriate for the Peruvian context.

The intention is to show that the biblical rhetoric given in the narrative can be used for preaching because “the texts of the Hebrew and Christian scripture have the ability to bring the reader into the world or worlds that are created within biblical narratives”¹. The biblical narrative gives hearers the opportunity to participate in its world, but the hearer can choose to participate or not. If the hearer participates, the narrative offers him:

“an event and space where he or she encounters the demands of the kingdom of God and has choice to accept or reject this. Indeed it is proclamation – proclamation rooted in Christ. It is proclamation that creates a crisis of choice and forces a decision upon the individual... At the same time, this experience can open a new way for the reader of the sermonic text to understand his own life experience in the living presence, as it were, of Christ.”²

Also, as the narrative has to do with human experience, these experiences are those that give authenticity and authority to the sermon,³ but these human experiences must be understood in the light of the word of God. Later on in this chapter more reasons will be given why narrative preaching is advantageous.

The study will be based on two pericopes of the Joseph story, these are: Genesis 44:18-34⁴ and 45:1-8.⁵

¹ Allen Permar Smith, *From Pulpit to Fiction: Sermonic Texts and Fictive Transformations*. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007, p.11.

² Allen Permar Smith, *From Pulpit to Fiction: Sermonic Texts and Fictive Transformations*, p.12.

³ Allen Permar Smith, *From Pulpit to Fiction: Sermonic Texts and Fictive Transformations*, p.16.

⁴ The intercession speech of Judah before Joseph.

The theme of the thesis has been chosen in order to encourage other preachers to consider new forms of constructing and preaching sermons in their homiletic repertoire. It is better for the preacher not to be enslaved to a particular homiletic method. As Mathewson argues: “We get enslaved to a particular style of exposition”⁶ and also he quotes Don Wardlaw, who opines that: “they in reality make the Word of God subservient to one particular, technical kind of reason”⁷.

To achieve this purpose the thesis begins in the first place with this general introduction explaining the reasons for the literary study of the biblical narrative. After this there is a survey of readings of the Joseph story by several authors. Thirdly there is a close reading of two pericopes of the Joseph narrative: Genesis 44:18-34 and 45:1-8; fourthly a study of a literary approach to the biblical narrative with these two pericopes; fifthly a construction of a sermon based on them with application in the Peruvian context. These pericopes are propitious for family issues. The dysfunctional family is an acute and sensitive problem in Peru and one cause is the internal and external migration. This narrative sermon will seek to pose some solutions from the perspective of the Joseph story for the reconciliation of the family. And finally, there is a brief study by means of fieldwork to indicate the context of the Peruvian church.

These two pericopes of Genesis have been chosen because they are the climax of the whole of the Joseph story. And they form the pivotal point of the story because after these pericopes the story follows an opposite direction. It is what Aristotle called reversal (περιπέτεια) and discovery (αναγνώρισις). Reversal “is when the circumstances change to their direct opposite ...and discovery, as the word suggest, is a change from ignorance to knowledge”⁸

⁵ Joseph is disclosed before his brothers.

⁶ Steven D. Mathewson, *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2002, p.25.

⁷ Don M. Wardlaw, Introduction: “The Need for New Shapes” in *Preaching Biblically*, ed. Don M. Wardlaw (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), 16. Quoted in Mathewson, *The Art of preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.25.

⁸ Aristotle. *Poetics*. Translated by Kenneth McLeish. London: Nick Hern Books 1999. Reprinted, London: Nick Hern Books, 2000, p.15.

2. Reasons for narrative preaching

2.1. Preaching and the hermeneutics of narrative texts

Biblical hermeneutics shows the reader that the Bible has different literary genres and the predominant one is narrative. So Bar-Efrat, referring to the Old Testament,⁹ says: “More than one third of the Hebrew Bible consists of narratives.”¹⁰ The readers must consider these genres at the moment of their interpretation and subsequent preaching. In this regard, preaching from biblical narratives has some problems because preachers often do not consider sufficiently the form of the narrative text. This reduces narrative texts to theological propositions. Although we can see theological propositions in the narrative text the first responsibility of the biblical reader is to regard the literary genre in both the interpretation and in preaching. When preachers only extract theological propositions from the narrative, they situate the narrative message at only an intellectual level, and often the listener has only a passive role in the sermon. Whereas the narrative enables a more active role for the listener because he is involved in the narrative world, feels part of the story, walks with characters, shares their feelings, and he can feel and perceive the main character, God, acting in the story. So, the listener can feel God’s power, i.e. God takes part in the drama and moves things according to his will. All these things lead the hearer to reflect and to take his own decisions. The reader cannot remain passive, he accepts or rejects God’s message.

As a preacher of the gospel in Peru I have encountered the same problem by not considering the literary form of the text. This has motivated me to make a study of biblical narratives in order to use them in my biblical preaching. The same problem can be seen in other preachers in Peru. Many appreciate the literary genre while studying and interpreting a narrative text but when they preach this is ignored. The typical sermon outline does not produce narrative preaching, in other words it does not follow a narrative outline but is propositional and argumentative. In contrast, Greidanus

⁹ Many scholars such as Bar-Efrat and Alter refer the Old Testament as Hebrew Bible. Bar-Efrat *Narrative Art in the Bible*, p.9; Alter *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p. xiii.

¹⁰ Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*. First published by SifriatPoalim (Tel Aviv) in Hebrew in 1979. Second edition 1984. Translated by Dorothea Shefer-Vanson. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd, 1989, 1992, 1997, p.9.

indicates that he will follow the same basic pattern of narrative for the outlines of his sermons.¹¹

Frequently in Peru Biblical narratives are only used with the children in Sunday School, Mathewson comments: “many churches teach Bible stories to children downstairs in the basement while the adults study Paul’s epistles upstairs in the auditorium.”¹² In the same sense Mathewson quotes Eugene H. Peterson: “Why is the story so often dismissed as not quite adult? Why, among earnest pastors, is the story looked down upon as not quite serious? It is ignorance, mostly. The story is the most adult form of language, the most serious form into which language can be put”¹³.

So the Joseph story, as with several other biblical stories, is always presented in its narrative form for the children but in the pulpit it is presented in the form of theological propositions and arguments. For example: when preaching on the story of Joseph’s dreams (Gen 37) a typical theme would be that of accomplishing one’s plans and dreams in life or on Joseph and Potiphar’s wife (Gen 39), the preacher would speak about how to overcome sexual temptation. Often such preaching includes individual and isolated topics and does not consider the narrative frame of the story.

Now, the biblical hermeneutic indicates that interpretation and preaching are intimately linked to literary genre. Robert Alter states, “I would prefer to insist on a complete interfusion of literary art with theological, moral, or historiosophical vision, the fullest perception of the latter dependent on the fullest grasp of the former”¹⁴ Also, Alter, quoting Joel Rosenberg, comments “the Bible’s value as a religious document is intimately and inseparably related to its value as literature”¹⁵. Similarly Jeffrey D. Arthurs comments: “Old Testament narratives are theological texts, they reveal God...

¹¹ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007, p.xii.

¹² Mathewson, *The Art of preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.23.

¹³ Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 119. Quoted in Mathewson, *The Art of preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.23.

¹⁴ Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. First published in 1981 by Basic Books. New and revised published, New York: Basic Books, 2011, p. 20.

¹⁵ Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.20.

they are also literary-rhetorical texts.”¹⁶ In other words, preaching cannot be separated from the kind of literature in which the biblical message is expressed. If the preacher does not respect the literary form he or she runs the risk of saying what God is not saying. So the preacher must seek that the biblical message arrives adequately to his audience, and for it, the preacher must know that the message and literary form are intimately joined.

Another issue concerning the hermeneutics and homiletics of a narrative text is about its historicity and literary composition. Some scholars view the text wholly from the historical perspective and they overlook the literary composition. Other scholars analyse the narrative text from its literary perspective and ignore the historical context. These extremes can lead us to think that narrative texts are past events without relevance to us or to think that it is all fiction. Neither extreme achieve reliable communication of the message of the biblical narrative text. When Meir Sternberg expresses the purpose of his book he asserts that there must be "a closer interworking of text and context"¹⁷. So when the preacher works in these two spheres, historical and literary perspective, for his interpretation of narrative texts, he should communicate more effectively the message of God's word. In another part of his book Sternberg speaks on the rule of narrative communication, he writes:

“Herein lies one of the Bible's unique rules: under the aegis of ideology, convention transmutes even invention into the stuff of history, or rather obliterates the line dividing fact from fancy in communication. So every word is God's word.”¹⁸

This way, the preacher of the Gospel is communicating fiction or historical events with relevance for today, and he imparts the God's message for his time.

2.2. Narrative and human experience

Employing only a propositional and argumentative shape of a sermon, based on a narrative passage makes it difficult to relate the biblical message with human

¹⁶ Jeffrey D. Arthurs “Preaching the Old Testament Narratives” in *Preaching the Old Testament*, ed. Scott M. Gibson, p.74.

¹⁷ Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and Drama of Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p.11.

¹⁸ Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p.34.

experience. In the biblical narrative the theological is joined to human experience. The goal of biblical narrative is to influence people's lives with God's message, so the biblical narrative emphasizes the human experience with God and his redemptive plan. Jeffrey D. Arthurs, referring to Old Testament narrative, comments: "They are also literary rhetorical texts. They use a well-stocked tool chest of literary devices to influence beliefs, values and actions. Persuasion comes by way of art, not argument."¹⁹ Alter writes of: "texts that are theologically motivated."²⁰ Also Fokkelman states: "the narrative prose of the Old Testament is characterized by an intentionality."²¹ The narrative form is one of the best ways to influence human experience with God's message, because the narrative is paradigmatic, i.e. a typical example, a pattern or model²² of human everyday life. So, by means of the narrative, the preacher has the opportunity to influence human experience in order to change people's lives with God's message.

Human experience can be impacted in different ways depending on the writers' purpose. The biblical writers want to influence their readers with God's theological and moral message. Their purpose was that people change the way they live, think and their attitude to God and live according to his commands.

Theology through the biblical narrative is given in the context of a human being's life. In other words, the biblical narrative shows theology applied to existence. So when a preacher wants to teach moral lessons²³ from a narrative text without considering the narrative frame, he simply obtains moral issues unconnected to each other. Such sermons or lessons are separated from experience and human reality, because they separate the moral from biblical theology or vice versa.

¹⁹ Jeffrey D. Arthurs "Preaching the Old Testament Narratives" in *Preaching the Old Testament*, ed. Scott M. Gibson, p.74.

²⁰ Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.26.

²¹ Jan P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide*. Translated from Dutch by Ineke Smit. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999, p.7.

²² *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Definition of paradigm: A typical example or pattern of something.

²³ Interview with Donald Sunkjian in Steven D. Mathewson. *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.185.

2.3. Advantages of communication in narrative form

Narrative remains one of the better ways to communicate a message because it contextualizes the message in the experience of the readers. The narrative aims to situate the reader in his narrative world i.e. the narrative draws the reader into the story and from there the narrative impacts the reader's life. Erich Auerbach comments on biblical narrative: “we are to fit our own life into his world, feel ourselves to be elements in its structure of universal history”²⁴

Also, the narrative is both practical and paradigmatic. Practical, because theology is applied to human experience: paradigmatic, because the biblical narratives are examples and models of God’s interventions in human life and behaviour.

Another advantage of the narrative is that it can be easily remembered and reproduced by the audience because it deals with concrete things and has a sequence which is easy to follow and interesting. Jeffrey D. Arthurs says: “the Bible abounds in stories, because they are indispensable to human understanding, and simply because human beings love stories.”²⁵ This is regardless of age because everyone likes stories.

By means of narrative it is possible to communicate more effectively the biblical message because narrative is the better form to represent the essence of the human reality in its different expressions.

3. Development of chapters

The thesis will be developed as follows: First of all there will be an introduction to the analysis and interpretation of the Joseph story proposed by a ten academics (chapter 1). Then the specific pericopes will be examined in detail by means of a close reading (chapter 2). With this understanding of the text a literary analysis will be made of the main features of the narrative (chapter 3). This analysis will form the basis of a sermon manuscript (chapter 4). Then the relevance of this sermon in the Peruvian context will be considered (chapter 5) and finally a brief conclusion (chapter 6).

²⁴ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis the Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Princeton, Tenth printing, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991, p.15.

²⁵ Scott M. Gibson, ed. *Preaching the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006, p.73.

CHAPTER 1

READINGS OF THE JOSEPH STORY BY SEVERAL AUTHORS

This chapter aims to survey different academic works on the Joseph story as narrative and then draws conclusions in order to see the story from different angles. This vision from different angles will permit us to have a wider perspective on the Joseph narrative. It is also intended to look critically at the methods of interpretation of the authors.

These academic works, by several scholars, cover almost a period of sixty years of studies on biblical narrative. In this thesis, the academic works are in the order of publication in order to show how the narrative of the Joseph story has been developed during these years.

In this part I follow the James B. Sellee's idea in his thesis.²⁶ He makes a brief analysis of ten authors that write on the Joseph story. But in my case, most of authors are different from those in Sellee's thesis, because this chapter seeks to show the variety of theological and literary viewpoints. So von Rad's literary analysis is different that of modern scholars. Nosson Scherman and Meir Zlotowitz are rabbis and their theological perspective differs from Christian theologians. Robert Alter marked a new stage in the narrative interpretation. Westermann and Longman could be considered moderates because they use biblical information available for their commentaries. Wildavsky and Fung make a focus on the Joseph story from a political and social vision. Sellee could be catalogued as a conservative biblical scholar. Greidanus and Patterson have a more New Testament viewpoint because they relate Joseph with Christ.

1. Gerhard von Rad.²⁷ In his book *Genesis*²⁸ all the Joseph story is given in the setting of wisdom. To show this perspective, von Rad compares the Joseph story

²⁶ James B. Sellee, *The Theme (s) of the Joseph Story: a Literary Analysis*. (PhD dissertation, University of Gloucestershire, 2006) p.1-27.

²⁷ Gerard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*. Revised edition 1972, Original translation by John H. Marks from German. First publication in English 1961. Tenth impression, Surrey: SCM Press Ltd., 1996.

with the book of Proverbs. So he asserts that the Joseph story is wisdom literature. The story is approximately the same time as King Solomon, when “teachers of wisdom travelled between Palestine and Egypt exchanging their wisdom. The Joseph story, as will be shown, is obviously related to the older teachings of wisdom” (p.435). The story shows the best instruction given by wisdom teachers to their young followers. The masters of wisdom teach self-control and faith to their disciples. An illustration of this wisdom is in Genesis 39 when Joseph shows self-control and faith in God. The ancient masters of wisdom cultivated their disciples on the basis of God’s revelation. They taught a life based on obedience to the commands and the fear of God in the midst of a pagan world.

Another aspect of wisdom in this narrative is its theological content. The wise person knows how to interpret confused events in the light of God’s purpose (p.437). But when von Rad concludes his commentary about Joseph, he asserts that the wisdom of the Joseph story seems detached from the covenant theology of Israel. He states: “God and his rule seem completely detached from covenant theology” (p.439). Von Rad comes to this conclusion because he has as a base for his investigation the Documentary Theory. This theory holds that the Pentateuch is formed by different documents from different authors and literary traditions which were not related together initially.

Von Rad is more interested to show that the Joseph story is wisdom literature, but he does not explore the purpose that the narrative has over people. He is not considering the influence and power of the narrative in people’s lives. He does not consider the purpose of the authors of the narratives. In this story, the narrator appears to be attempting to make the people of Israel change their attitudes and vision to their forefathers and God. Wisdom is not the focus of this story but that the Israelites will change their minds and hearts. A possible context of this story could be that people were indifferent to God’s work amongst them. Then the narrator's purpose was to remove this attitude by means of this story.

²⁸ “The German edition of this commentary was first published between 1949 and 1953”. Quoted in A. A. Anderson, Genesis: A Commentary, *Scottish Journal of Theological* (1964), 17: pp. 353-354, 2 February 2009 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0036930600009479>.

2. **Nosson Scherman and Meir Zlotowitz.**²⁹ Both authors are rabbis, draw upon their commentaries from the Talmud and Midrash and make a theological focus on the Joseph story.

According to these authors each character in the Scriptures has a mission given by God. So, the things that occurred to Jacob, Joseph and Judah were by God's initiative. God was fulfilling his plan and promise which was to make a nation from Abraham's descendants. God had destined Joseph for this mission and he begins the accomplishment in Egypt.

Joseph had a mission and the Lord prepared Joseph him for it (p.1577). God fulfilled his promise by means of Joseph, God made him ruler in Egypt and led his family there where they became a nation. Joseph is the originator and preparer of the people of Israel. God used and prepared him for this purpose (p. 1578).

God used a family conflict to his purpose. This way, God did his will and fulfilled his promise. So the authors' focus is theological because all that happened to Joseph, his family and Jacob was according to God's purpose.

Also the authors consider the conflicts between Joseph and his brothers as prophetic, because they assert that Joseph was chosen to rule only in Egypt, not in Israel. When Israel was in Palestine, God chose David, a descendant of Judah, to rule in Israel and as in Egypt; this produced a conflict for the kingdom between David's house (Judah) and Ephraim's house (Joseph). But in Genesis 48 the prophetic blessing of Jacob to Judah points out that from Judah's offspring will come Israel's kings and finally the Messiah of Israel, whom Israel is expecting.

These authors are interested in God's work by means of Joseph to preserve Israel. All events were led by God. But they do not consider the effect of the narrative over the Israelites. They have a strong emphasis in the theological aspect, but they do not ask why the narrator uses this method to convey God's message. They would need to consider the narrative again because in this way they could perceive the transforming of the people. Time has shown the effect of the narrative on the people

²⁹ Nosson Scherman and Meir Zlotowitz, ed. *Bereishis: Genesis*. 2 Volumes. First edition (6 Vols.) impression 1977, 1982; Second edition (2 Vols.) Brooklyn: Mesora Publications, LTD. 1995.

of Israel because they have a strong conviction that God guides them and this conviction is the result of teaching through narrative.

3. **Robert Alter**³⁰, in his book *The Art of Biblical Narrative*,³¹ begins his dissertation on the unity of the biblical narrative, and to show this takes parts of Genesis 37, 38 and 39. By means of these texts he shows that Genesis 38, the story of Judah and Tamar is not an insertion into the Joseph narrative as many scholars think, and does not break the unity of the narrative, but is part of it. From this first discussion, Alter assumes that *recognize* and *know* are key words to the unity and theme of the Joseph story (pp.1-11), “the central actions turn on the axis of true knowledge versus false (...) this theme of knowledge is formally enunciated through the paired key words, *haker* “recognize” and *yadoa*’ “know” that run through the story” (p.198). So, the main theme is that Joseph, his brothers and his father must know God’s destiny for them. They should recognise God’s guiding in the destiny of his people (p.198).

Justly the climax of the story is the great moment of acknowledgment (pp.170-174, 198-220 cf. Genesis 45). This recognition is given in the context of confrontation within a dysfunctional family with strong moral problems. This recognition involves forgiveness and reconciliation to the family and knowledge of God’s plan to save them.

Alter tries to show the unity and purpose of the Joseph story only by means of a literary approach. This literary approach of Alter is an excellent contribution to the biblical hermeneutic, but it gives a partial view of the purpose of the story because the story must be related with the entire context of Genesis. So the reader must consider other aspects such as the historical context. The hermeneutic implies more than a literary approach.

³⁰ Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*

³¹ Alter makes a literary approach to biblical narrative of the Old Testament and he does not consider the New Testament narrative in this study, because, according to him the New Testament narrative is different in language, style and time. However he recognises: “There are, of course, certain literary as well as theological continuities between the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament” (p. xiii).

In biblical narrative, the reader cannot separate theology from the narrative, because the purpose of the biblical narrative is to show to God in his relation with human beings. In this case, Alter emphasizes the narrative technique over the theology, but the biblical narrative has a theological emphasis. This emphasis is shown in the biblical narrative by means of the need of an encounter and response to God by the human being. So the main emphasis of the biblical narrative is theological which is manifested in the human experience of God. The narrative technique is a tool to achieve this aim.

Two things appear to concern Alter, the unity of the biblical narrative and the narrative techniques. These things must concern the biblical interpreter in his exegetical work on the narrative text. Alter talks obliquely about the power of the narrative, when he says that the narrative engraves in the mind of people indelible teachings that have endured through time. Also he refers to forgiveness and reconciliation which are produced by recognition. But Alter does not remark on the power of the narration to change people in their vision of the world and much less in their attitude to God.

4. **Claus Westermann.**³² According to this author, the Joseph story is situated in the time of the monarchy in Israel, in the period of David and Solomon (p.249). Due to this date Westermann thinks that the main purpose of the story was to encourage the people of Israel to accept the monarchy. The biblical narrator, by means of the story, shows the benefits of the monarchy, and makes a contrast between the simple lives on nomadic shepherds with life at the Egyptian court (p.249). This organization of the nation would assure Israel's future and other people outside of Israel (p.250). As well as God working with Joseph, so too God will work with the monarchy established in Israel. And God's action in the story is precisely what gives unity to this narrative (p.251). Possibly the narrator is aware of the conflicts caused in the establishment of the monarchy whereby "the main line (of the story) is concerned with a family event and leads from a shattering of the peace to reconciliation" (p.250). So the story of Joseph is a story of salvation and the survival of God's people and others outside of Israel. God will preserve Israel by

³² Claus Westermann, *Genesis 37-50: A Commentary*. Translated by John J. Scullion S. J. London: SPCK, 1987.

his kings. So this story would have the purpose to defend the monarchy of David and his descendants in Israel

The purpose of the biblical narrator was to cause listeners to reflect by means of the events narrated about Joseph and his rise to power in Pharaoh's court. This reflection must come from listeners themselves. In a way, the biblical narrator was defending the monarchy in Israel.

Westermann appears to understand the power of the narrative to change attitudes in people about any issue and in this case the narrative was used to animate people to accept the monarchy in Israel. But Westermann does not treat directly the theme of the transforming action that the narrative produces over the hearer or readers.

5. **Aaron Wildavsky.**³³ According to this author the Joseph story is a double story because it shows on the one hand wisdom in the way of world and on the other hand obedience to God's law. The reader should decide what priority these then have in their lives. For Jews the fidelity to God's law is more important than worldly wisdom. "A Jew does not obey values, they obey God" (p.2) or Judaism is "centred on God's commands, not on man's will" (p.3).

So the author asserts that the Joseph story is anti-wisdom (p.9) because worldly wisdom is limited and the story of Joseph demonstrates this. The limit is that it can favour one and harm another. So in the Joseph story, Joseph and the Pharaoh are favoured but Joseph's family and the Egyptian people are harmed because they are oppressed. The biblical narrator is aware of this double story in the narrative of Joseph.

Due to the perspective that Wildavsky has, he describes Joseph as an immoral man because he enslaves his family and the Egyptian people. Joseph has wisdom but His wisdom does not save him from immorality. He says: Joseph "never recognizes his own lust for power whether as an unthinking boy or as a scheming servant of Pharaoh" (p.202). Also Wildavsky quotes George Coats "his acts are governed not

³³ Aaron Wildavsky, *Assimilation versus Separation: Joseph the administrator and the Politics of Religion in Biblical Israel*. Third printing, New Brunswick and London: Transaction publishers, 2009.

by wisdom and discretion, not by justice for his brothers under the authority of his office, but by capricious use of power, by deception, by false accusation..." (p.204)

So, for Wildavsky the Joseph story is an example of what the wisdom in the way of world can make and for this reason Joseph must not be imitated.

Wildavsky neglects the narrative aspect to consider the story from a political-social. He judges this story from the modern concepts of sociology. He does not consider the main aim of the narrative which seeks to change people's life so they see the world in a new way. Wildavsky in his eagerness to exalt God denigrates his work, whose work is conveyed by means of narrative with the purpose that people change their attitude to Him.

6. **Yiu-Wing Fung.**³⁴ The interest of Fung is in the characterization of Joseph. He analyses the speeches of Joseph in order to make a portrayal of him and his ideology. Fung aims "...to provide a portrayal of Joseph from a different perspective by scrutinizing his speeches" (p.12) and these speeches are contrasted with Joseph's actions and God's intentions and actions (p.12). According to Fung, Joseph's speeches are incoherent in themselves and with his actions. Joseph talks of salvation with his brothers but the same time he enslaves them. "Joseph, on the one hand, is a great saviour and, on the other, is also a great enslaver. Salvation and enslavement at the same time on such a scale of magnitude are remarkable. One can trace the ambiguity to the idea of subservience for survival" (p.201).

Fung asserts that Joseph is a man obsessed with his suffering and destiny. He is always remembering what he suffered when he was thrown into the pit and sold as a slave by his brothers. Also he talks about his destiny because he considers himself to be God's chosen one to save his family and other people. His obsession changes Joseph from victim to victimizer.

In accordance with Fung, the experience of Joseph forms in him a political ideology "that the hierarchical structure of domination and subservience is necessary for survival" (p.199).

³⁴ Yiu -Wing Fung, *Victim and Victimizer. Joseph's interpretation of destiny*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academy Press, 2000.

Fung, like Wildavsky, neglects the narrative and sees the Joseph story from a political perspective. The reader can take out many conclusions of a narrative, but the reader cannot neglect its purpose and the manner in which the narrative works with the hearer. Fung draws conclusions from the Joseph story without considering its persuasive nature to transform the thought and attitudes of the people, in this case, regarding God's sovereignty.

7. **James Bombo Sellee.**³⁵Sellee's aim is to investigate the reasons why the application of the narrative analysis to the Joseph story, by various authors, produces different results about its theme. So Sellee makes a resume of ten different authors on the theme of the Joseph story. He observes that each author arrives at a different opinion about it. Sellee says this "could be due to the different methods and complex nature of the text" (p.257).

According to Sellee the whole of the Joseph story is given in a context of "a massive family breakdown" (p.258) but this conflict is resolved at the end of the story. All the events and characters help to resolve the conflicts. These conflicts are shown through favouritism, abuse of power, jealous, separation, etc. The reader notes that through these conflicts the characters evolve to be better and the events play an important role in the development of the characters.

Sellee says that the key to understanding the Joseph narrative is to see God's intervention during the story, despite God being hidden. God is responsible for all events according to his plan and develops this plan by means of a dysfunctional family.

Sellee expresses the theme of the Joseph story in the following way: "God's providential work with and through Jacob's dysfunctional family, preserving it and blessing others." (p.267).

³⁵ James B. Sellee, *The Theme (s) of the Joseph Story: a Literary Analysis*. (PhD dissertation, University of Gloucestershire, 2006).

Sellee makes a detailed literary analysis, he draws conclusions but in his study he does not perceive the force of the narrative. He is not interested in the function and aim that the narrative has over the hearer or reader. All readers of narratives must consider their persuasive force because in this consideration the reader will find the sense and purpose of the story. Sellee's analysis is a good academic work but this analysis does not take into account feelings, emotions and reactions that the narrative produced on the reader.

8. **Tremper Longman III.**³⁶ For Longman the theme of the story is expressed in chapter 50:19-20, where Joseph expresses: "He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people" (p.150). Joseph understands that each event in his life has great meaning because all these events lead to the purpose of his life; to save his family and many people. Previously in Gen 45:5,7,8 Joseph had expressed this purpose, God had sent him to rescue his family from a severe famine.

Longman says: "There is also coherence of theme, noted in part by the common use of the term *bless* in the story. Not only is Joseph blessed, but those around him often are as well. After all, God was with him." (p.149) This word also gives coherence to the theme because it is connected to God's promise.

Now, God's promise included the preservation of Jacob's family, so chapters 48 and 49 show Jacob's blessing to Joseph's children and the rest of his sons. These blessings are to the future of Jacob's offspring.

So, the purpose of the Joseph story is to show the preservation of Jacob's offspring by means of Joseph, "Joseph was God's agent in the rescue on the family of God." (p.174) and this way, the blessing of God's promise is fulfilled, and the seed of Abraham was preserved.

Longman makes a brief commentary about the Joseph story, he is exact in his conclusions, but he does not integrate his commentaries with the eloquence of the narrative, with those elements that move and persuade the readers. When the commentator makes only an intellectual analysis his commentaries are cold. But if

³⁶ Tremper Longman III, *How to Read Genesis*. Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2005.

his commentaries are integrated to the narrative eloquence these commentaries have colour and life and can move the people change their life.

9. **Sidney Greidanus.**³⁷ Greidanus writes his book to encourage and teach Christian preachers to prepare expository sermons which show Christ through the stories in Genesis and these stories must reflect “the climax of God’s revelation in the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament” (p.1). So Greidanus’ focus on these stories is theological, Christological and practical. However, his main emphasis is Christological.

Greidanus follows a pattern, in the first place he expresses the theme of the text, in the second he speaks of the way that it would help Israel, and then thirdly how this text is related to Christ and the New Testament, and finally, how the text could help the church of Christ and believers.

To achieve his purpose, Greidanus uses narrative criticism in the analysis of narrative texts as one of his methods. The Joseph story is analysed on pages 335-473.

According to Greidanus, the central theme in the Joseph story is God’s sovereignty to fulfil his plan of salvation despite human evil: “that the sovereign God is able to use even evil human deeds to accomplish salvation” (p.421).

So, the main concern of Greidanus is to show how to preach Christ from narratives of Genesis. He considers these narratives contain types and analogies of Christ.

An objective of Greidanus is the use of these narratives in sermons. He gives many instructions and examples of how to construct sermons based in narrative texts, but he does not consider instructions about how the narrative must be expressed with its power to persuade people to reflect what they read. He only considers the theological and literary foundations of the narrative, but he does not consider its praxis. The narrative plays with feelings and emotions of the people to achieve its purpose. Man is an intellectual and emotional being and in the narrative these two

³⁷ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*. Grand Rapids, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007.

elements are integrated. This makes the difference between the narrative and other ways of communication.

10. Richard D. Patterson.³⁸ This author makes an analysis using the tools and principles of literary criticism. He applies these to the narrative and places the Joseph story in a historical and cultural context. He examines the story from the perspective of the courtesan narrative because much of it occurs in Pharaoh's court. Patterson examines the setting, plot, characters and artistry of the composition. The setting happens in the times of Sesostris II, the Pharaoh of Egypt. By means of Joseph God is working out his own plan for Israel. In the characterization he highlights three main characters: Jacob, Judah and Joseph. Jacob is the most complex one because he shows a lot of change during the story. Judah is presented as leader among his brothers. Joseph is the protagonist of the story and is shown as a person trustworthy and pure in his actions. He could serve God, his people and the society of his time. About the artistry of the composition, he quotes Alter stating that it "involves an elaborate and inventive use of most of the major techniques of biblical narrative"³⁹ (p.163).

Patterson concludes with four points: (1) Joseph story is the conclusion and climax of the patriarchal period. It is related to God's promise to Abraham. (2) "It also provides an enlightening study of human character." (p.164). (3) Joseph is a type of Jesus, because in this story the reader can find parallels between Joseph and Christ. (4) Joseph is a type of believer because there are parallels between Joseph's life and the believers'.

As others authors, Patterson makes an analysis according to the literary criticism of narratives. His analysis is a literary, historical and intellectual exercise from the Christian perspective. He does not bring into account the eloquence this story has to convey its message. i.e. how the preacher can deliver these truths narratively to move the people to reflect and change their attitudes to God and his plan of salvation.

³⁸ Richard D. Patterson, Joseph in Pharaoh's Court. *Bibliotheca Sacra*. BSAC 164:654 (Apr 2007).

³⁹ Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.219.

11. Conclusion

All these authors use literary criticism when they make their analysis of the Joseph story. Each one has interesting and important contributions to understand this story. Most of their concern is in the literary, academic and intellectual analyses. They consider little or nothing about the way the narration works when it is delivered to the readers or hearers. They do not integrate exegesis with the eloquence of the narrative.

The narrative is designed to be communicated at an intellectual and spiritual level⁴⁰, because this is the way the narrative achieves its power to move the people to reflect and seek a change in their attitudes, thoughts and life. All narrative has a climax and to this point the reader is led and at this point the reader takes his decisions, to accept or reject the message.

Many commentators fail in their aim when they analyse a narrative text because they do not consider the human part i.e. how the human being reacts before a narrative. This is necessary to consider because this will give a better understanding to the reader.

Exegetical analysis is necessary and essential to discovery the meaning of a text but the way how to communicate this meaning is also essential and the narrative sermon is an appropriate tool because the narrative is designed to involve the mind and spirit of the man, in this special design lies its power to reach the human heart.

See a Comparative table about these authors on the page 108.

⁴⁰ In this case this word is used to refer human feelings and emotions.

CHAPTER TWO

CLOSE READING OF TWO PERICOPE IN GENESIS 44:18-34 AND 45:1-8

After studying the readings of the Joseph story by various scholars and noting their limitations and viewpoints, a close reading will be made of the two significant pericopes chosen. This is in order to examine what the narrative says itself. This will form the basis of the literary analysis of the narrative and subsequent sermon.

This chapter begins with personal observations, commentaries, opinions of several authors, some comparisons between the Hebrew text⁴¹ and the LXX⁴² verse by verse in each pericope, general conclusions and finally an outline. To this work I will use the English Standard Version (ESV), because ESV is a version in contemporary English which follows the wording of the underlying Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic text using an “essentially literal” translation philosophy.⁴³

1. Two pericopes

These two pericopes are two speeches. The first pericope is Judah’s speech and the second is Joseph’s speech.

In these two pericopes the story is charged with a very strong emotional and psychological state. The narrator shows by means of Judah and Joseph this tremendous emotional and psychological burden, which involves all of Jacob’s family.

Here is produced the reversal (περιπετεια)⁴⁴ and discovery (αναγνωρισις)⁴⁵ of the story. From the reversal and discovery, the story takes a new direction and the characters arrive at the knowledge of those things that were hidden to them.

⁴¹ WTM, JDP - Groves-Wheeler Westminster Morphology and Lemma Database (WTM), 2008 WTM Release. 4.10. WTT, Leningrad Hebrew Old Testament. Quoted from BibleWorks 8, 2009.

⁴² LXX Septuaginta (Old Greek Jewish Scriptures) edited by Alfred Rahlfs. 1935. Quoted from BibleWorks 8, 2009.

⁴³ Rodney J. Decker (2004), The English Standard Version: A Review Article. *The Journal of Ministry & Theology* 8 (2): 5-31.

⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.15. “Reversal is when the circumstances change to their direct opposite.” Henry George Liddell, and Robert Scott, comp. *A Greek – English Lexicon*. Revised and augmented by

These two speeches form the pivotal point of the Joseph story. Laurence A. Turner refers to the narrative space given to Judah's speech, stating that this "demonstrates its significance and hint that a turning point in the narrative has been reached. Joseph's response will tip the whole story one way or the other."⁴⁶ This statement by Turner is valid for the two pericopes because Turner includes Joseph's response, which is the second pericope.

1.1. Pericope of Judah's speech, Gen 44:18-34

1.1.1. General features of Judah's speech

The commentators agree that this pericope is the climax of the Joseph story. So von Rad comments "At the climax of the dramatic event, when the tension has reached its limits, Judah utters a speech in which he pours everything that could perhaps still alter the misery in which has fallen the brothers and Jacob."⁴⁷ Greidanus makes a sketch to show the climax⁴⁸ of the story.

It is a diplomatic speech because Judah approaches Joseph with the corresponding protocol. According to Turner, "Judah's speech is thus a model of diplomacy".⁴⁹ Hamilton states: "Judah is careful to follow protocol in so identifying himself, his brothers, and even his father, when addressing a superior."⁵⁰ And von Rad qualifies this speech as "one of the most beautiful examples of that lofty rhetorical culture which was

Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie. With a supplement 1968. Seventh Edition 1897, last reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983, p.1382. "Περίπτετα: "Turning right about, reversal, of the normal order, sudden change of condition or fortune."

⁴⁵ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.15. "Discovery, as the word suggests, is a change from ignorance to knowledge." Liddell and Scott, Comp. *A Greek – English Lexicon*, p.101. "Αναγνωρίζω: Recognize or come to the knowledge of a person or thing, so as to produce a denouement." "Αναγνωρισίς: Recognition as leading to the denouement."

⁴⁶ Lawrence A. Turner, *Genesis*. Second Edition, Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009, p.194.

⁴⁷ Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p.393,394.

⁴⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, p.410, 416.

⁴⁹ Turner, *Genesis*, p.195.

⁵⁰ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 18-50*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995, p.569.

in full blossom at the time of our narrator... Doubtless this speech is to be evaluated for itself by the reader as a little work of art.”⁵¹

In literary language, this speech is *mimesis*⁵² or a representation of reality because by means of this speech Judah makes a summary of the events occurred in chapters 42 and 43, in order to persuade Joseph to change his attitude.

1.1.2. Previous speeches of Judah

Judah’s speeches, prior to Gen 44:18-34, show the callousness and coldness of Judah’s feelings for his family. In Gen 37 (cf. Gen 42:21) is shown his evil feelings, attitudes and actions towards his brother Joseph and his father, and in Gen 38 is seen his evil feelings towards his daughter-in-law. So there is a contrast between the speeches of Gen 44:18-34 and those previous contained in Gen 37 and 38.

Gen 37:26-27 shows his disparagement and insensibility to Joseph because when Joseph is in the pit, Judah does not hear Joseph’s pleas (Gen 42:21).

The speech in Gen 38:11 reveals him as a liar and selfish, and that he is more interested in his own benefit than that of Tamar’s. Judah does not fulfil what the levirate law demands towards Tamar. He blames Tamar for the death of his children and now he fears for his youngest son. This way, he denies Tamar "her right to well-being and status in the community"⁵³ and condemns her to ostracism.

In Judah’s speech in Gen 38:16-18, the narrator focuses on what he says about Tamar, his daughter-in-law, who is disguised as prostitute.⁵⁴ Also Waltke says: Judah is not

⁵¹ Von Rad, *Genesis*, p.394.

⁵² Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. p.3-23.

⁵³ Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary*. With Cathi J. Fredricks, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001, p.510.

⁵⁴ In verse 16 the word for prostitute is זָנָה (zanah), but in verse 21 is קְדֵשָׁה (quedeshah) which is translated as “cult prostitute”. This difference appears to be to defend the “dignity” of Judah, because when a man was sleeping with a cult prostitute, it was not as bad as with a street prostitute. The LXX takes as synonymous both Hebrew words and translates them by πόρνη (porne). But in verse 24 the translation is πορνεία (porneia) (Hamilton, *The book of Genesis Chapters 18-50*, p.447).

consciously committing incest and adultery (cf. Lev. 18:15).⁵⁵ This speech reveals Judah as unscrupulous, adulterous, a fornicator and without a sense of dignity.

In Gen 38: 20-23 Judah apparently is shown as an honourable man, but behind that appearance it hides a selfish and callous man, because he is willing to pay for a prostitute. About this point Wenham says: “Whereas he had reneged on his solemn promise to give his son Shelah to Tamar in marriage, he is very anxious to pay the goat he had promised to a common prostitute.”⁵⁶

In Gen 38: 24-26 is the climax of this story because Judah reaches his highest point of wickedness and his life has a radical reversal. When he noticed that Tamar is pregnant Judah says: “*Bring her out, and let her be burned.*” Judah becomes a severe executor, he demands death by burning. Alter comments: “The naked unreflective brutality of Judah's response to the seemingly incriminating news is even stronger in the original.”⁵⁷ The reader has the sensation that Judah was wanting Tamar's death and that moment was the opportunity, but Tamar had proof that involve Judah's fornication.⁵⁸ When Judah identified his things he recognized his sin against Tamar; Judah said: “*She is more righteous than I*”. This action produced a transformation in Judah's life. After this action Judah appears again in chapters 43 and 44, but in these chapters he is a different man from chapters 37 and 38. In chapter 44:16 Judah is willing to assume his responsibility for the alleged failure against the Egyptian ruler. This last verse serves as an introduction to Judah's speech where he is defending his father's life and his brother Benjamin. Thus in chapter 38:20-23 is produced the reversal in Judah's life, from here Judah will be a different person, which will be shown ahead. The narrator shows Judah as a character in the process of change whose climax occurs in Gen 44.

⁵⁵ Waltke: *Genesis: A Commentary*, p.512.

⁵⁶ Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary, volume 2: Genesis 16-50*. Dallas: Word Books, Publisher, 1994, p.368.

⁵⁷ Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.9.

⁵⁸ According to Alter the verb recognize (נָכַר: *nakar*) is the key word to this story and the whole of the Joseph story. This verb gives unity to the Judah-Tamar story with the Joseph story (Alter, p.4-10).

1.1.3. Analysis verse by verse

Verse 18

From this verse the literary tension starts to climb to its highest summit.

The verse introduces the speech and shows rules of the protocol before a high ranking authority. Judah speaks to Joseph with great respect and reverence. Judah does not recognize Joseph, so he addresses Joseph as the lord of the land of Egypt.

The previous verses describe the context, Joseph had decided that Benjamin would stay as his slave (44:17) because in his sack was found Joseph's cup (44:11). This verdict of Joseph provoked in Judah this dramatic reaction that leads him to make this speech.

This verse shows Judah as a transformed person who is concerned for the life of his father and brothers. In this sense Alter states: "Twenty-two years earlier, he stood with his brothers and silently watched when the bloodied tunic they had brought to their father Jacob sent him into a fit anguish: now he is willing to do anything in order not to have see his father suffer that way again."⁵⁹ And he is the one who was responsible before his father for Benjamin's life.⁶⁰

In this verse and throughout the rest of the pericope the narrator does not give any direct description of Judah, but his actions show him merciful, concerned and engaged in his father, and family wellbeing.

Characteristics of Judah may be taken out of the language in the speech. Judah is shown as a determined man ("*went up to him and said*"), respectful and diplomatic ("*my lord*"), cautious ("*let not your anger burn against your servant*"), shrewd and crafty ("*you are like Pharaoh himself*").

⁵⁹ Alter, *The Art of the biblical Narrative*, p.218.

⁶⁰ Claus Westerman, *Joseph: Studies of the Joseph stories in Genesis*. German original published in 1990. Translate by Omar Kaste. Edinburgh: T & T Clark Ltd, 1996, p.88.

When the ESV translates verse 18: “*Judah went up*” it captures Judah’s action because verse 14 says: “*They fell before him to the ground*”. Judah rose, approached Joseph and spoke to him. This action describes Judah as a resolute man.

The expression “*please let your servant speak a word in my lord's ears*” shows Judah as an anguished person. Keil & Delitzsch say: “Judah, who had pledged himself to his father for Benjamin, ventured in the anguish of his heart to approach Joseph, and implore him to liberate his brother”⁶¹. So the Hebrew text and the LXX agree in the emphasis of Judah’s plea to Joseph, with a strong expression of request.

When Judah approaches Joseph to intercede for Benjamin, he is not claiming justice because they had been found guilty, but Judah instead is pleading for compassion.⁶² Afterwards in verse 33, the mercy that Judah is seeking is what Joseph permits him “*remain instead of the boy*”.

Judah addresses Joseph as “*my lord*” (seven times) and he says of himself “*your servant*” (thirteen times). The LXX uses “*servant*” twelve times as *παις*: boy, child, girl. And one time uses *οικετης* (v.33): house slave, domestic. The Greek appears to indicate an insignificant slave. This contrast and relation from *lord* to *servant* are throughout the whole pericope. These expressions show Joseph’s supremacy and the humiliation of Judah, his brothers and father before Joseph.

All the pericope is developed by means of this dramatic irony because “the reader notes a discord between the story and the signals transmitted by the author in his narration.”⁶³ Previously Joseph’s brothers and father had refused his dominion over them (Gen 37) but now they are recognizing him as “*lord*” and they are presenting themselves as “*servants*”.

⁶¹ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: volume I, The Pentateuch*. Translated from German by James Martin. Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, p.364.

⁶² Scherman & Zlotowitz, *Bereishis: Genesis Section II [vol.1 (b)]*, p.1946.

⁶³ Daniel Marguerat & Yvan Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Story*. Translation by John Bowden 1999 from the French *Pour lire les récits bibliques*, published 1998 by Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris. London: SCM Press, 1999, p.114.

The expression “*anger burn*”⁶⁴, in Hebrew and Greek text indicate anger which involves the strongest human passion. A person controlled by anger in contrast with reason. Judah is pointing out to Joseph that he must not be controlled by anger but by reason. Reason must have priority over anger. “*Like Pharaoh*” would also indicate that Joseph must be a wise and prudent man because this is characteristic of a good ruler.

Verse 19

This verse is a repetition of the questions in Gen 43:7, 27 where Joseph asks for his father and youngest brother.

Here Judah begins the body of his speech. Judah reminds Joseph of his request for information about their father and brother: “*My lord asked his servants, saying, Have you a father, or a brother?*” Judah starts reminding Joseph of his own words in order to influence and persuade him. Judah wants to get a favourable response; that is, the liberation of Benjamin.

When Judah says “*My lord asked his servants*” this appears to argue that Joseph is the one who started the trouble for the brothers. If Joseph would not have asked them about his father and brother these things would not have happened.⁶⁵

This verse marks the beginning of Judah’s argument, for the life of his father. As Wenham says: “Judah goes into more details about the age of Jacob and his attachment to Benjamin.”⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Hebrew text uses two words: חָרָה (charah) and אָפַח (aph). These indicate a person that is burning or consuming with anger, and in this case contrast with reason or good judgement. The Hebrew word אָפַח shows a strong respiration making to sound the nose for cause of anger. The LXX uses only a word θυμῶσ (thumoo), this word indicate an angry passion.

⁶⁵ John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A biblical theology commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992, p.222.

⁶⁶ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p.426.

Verse 20

In the whole speech Jacob is not mentioned by his name, but as “*father*” fourteen⁶⁷ times. Jacob is also described as an “*old man*” and by the expression that he “*loves him*” (Benjamin). The phrase “*old man*” refers to his frail condition that appears to concern Judah because he and his brothers see how Jacob's life is being consumed by his sorrow for Joseph.

The expression “*loves him*” indicates favouritism to Benjamin rather than for his other children. In Gen 37:3,4 Jacob had favouritism for Joseph. With Benjamin, Jacob repeats this same favouritism. The main reason for Jacob's favoritism for Joseph and Benjamin is that they are children of his favourite wife Rachel. About Jacob's favouritism for Rachel and Joseph, Wenham comments: “Favouritism has a long pedigree in Jacob's family. Isaac loved Esau more than Jacob, Rebekah loved Jacob more than Esau, and most pertinently Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah 25:28: 29:30). His love for Rachel is now transferred to Joseph, Rachel's son.”⁶⁸ This favouritism provoked Joseph's brothers to hate him. Wenham says: “Now this same favouritism is cited as ground for mercy; the other brothers, or at least Judah, have accepted that the love for their father must override all other grudges.”⁶⁹ This verse also shows the empathy that Judah had for his father, and this empathy seems to motivate Judah's speech. Alter states: “His entire speech is motivated by the deepest empathy for his father.”⁷⁰

So the favouritism had caused hate amid this family, but now, Judah seems to give more importance to the health of his father. He and his brothers change their hate for love for their father. It was a great change compared with Gen 37.

In this verse Judah asserts that Joseph is dead (cf. 42:13, 32), because he and his family never saw him again.

⁶⁷ In Hebrew text the noun “father” only appears fourteen times but in English translations, fifteen times. In the Hebrew, in verse 22 is added the noun “father” in the English version in order to give a better sense to the text.

⁶⁸ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p.350.

⁶⁹ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p.426.

⁷⁰ Alter, *The Art of the biblical narrative*, p. 218.

Verse 21

Judah remembers Joseph's request to see Benjamin, because that was the only way that Joseph would sell food to Judah and his brothers (Gen 42:13, 15, 16, 20, 34; 43:3,5, 8,11,13,15).

In this verse, is repeated a motif⁷¹ and a theme⁷², they are: Joseph's and Jacob's desire to see Benjamin. Joseph's desire to see Benjamin is repeated three times: vv.21, 23 and 26. These repetitions appear to show Joseph's interest in his youngest brother in order to protect him from his brothers' evil. Jacob's desire to see Benjamin is repeated four times: vv. 30, 31, 32, 34. Judah told Joseph that Benjamin's life was very important due to his father's health. Judah also makes Joseph know the disastrous consequences to Jacob if he does not see Benjamin. These references about Benjamin show the contrast between Judah and Joseph and the interests of each one. These interests appear to show selfishness in Joseph and generosity in Judah's part because he shows interest in his father and his brother.

The expression "*bring him down*" in both Hebrew and Greek texts are imperatives verbs.⁷³ This command had been expressed by Joseph, the ruler of Egypt and this command appears to be the motive for which Judah and his brothers insist to their father that they must take Benjamin with them.

"*I may set my eyes on him.*" The idea in the Hebrew and Greek text is the same; it is to check the veracity of an assertion. In this case the assertion is that Benjamin is well among his brothers. Joseph wants to check that his brothers do not cause any damage to Benjamin. Joseph feared that his brothers could have caused some damage to his youngest brother such as they did to him.

⁷¹ Alter, *The Art of the biblical narrative*, p.120. "Motif. A concrete image, sensory quality, action, or object recurs through a particular narrative"

⁷² Alter, *The Art of the biblical narrative*, p.120. "Theme. An idea that is part of the value-system of narrative-- it can be moral, moral-psychological,... it can also be associated with motif"

⁷³ In the Hebrew text the verb יָרַד (yarad) is hiphil imperative. In the LXX the verb καταγαγετε (katagagete) is imperative aorist active. Both texts indicate that Joseph demands to do this action to his brothers.

Verse 22

This verse emphasizes that: Benjamin cannot leave his father Jacob because he would die if Benjamin is separated from him. So, the narrator anticipates⁷⁴ what would happen to Jacob if Benjamin leaves him and not come back.

The main argument that Judah uses to persuade Joseph is the possibility of Jacob's death if Benjamin does not go back. Judah repeats this argument six times: vv. 22, 29, 30, 31, 34. "Judah is appealing to Joseph's human sensitivity."⁷⁵ This argument shows Judah's fear for his father's health.

"The boy cannot leave", "if he should leave". These expressions emphasize how important it was to Jacob that Benjamin stayed with him. Benjamin is the motif of Jacob's life. Joseph's command (v21) was a sentence of death for Jacob.

Verse 23

When Judah says to Joseph: *"you said to your servants"*, he is putting on Joseph the responsibility of Jacob's possible death. This verse is directly related with verse 19 when Judah reproaches Joseph: *"My lord asked his servants"*.

In the speech the verb "see" is repeated five times the verb "see": vv. 23, 26, 28, 31,34 and the noun "eyes" in v.21. Verse 21 refers to Joseph's desire to see Benjamin, v.23 and 26 refers to them being received by Joseph so they can buy food, v.28 refers to Jacob's grief because he nevermore saw or had news of Joseph, v.31 refer to Jacob's grief if he would not see Benjamin and v.34 refers to Judah's fear to see his father die because Benjamin no returning to him. According to Alter these repetitions seem to be part of the main theme of the Joseph story, it is knowledge. He asserts: "the central actions turn on the axis of true knowledge versus false... this theme of knowledge ...runs through the story."⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Marguerat & Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories*, p.89-96. In narrative language the anticipation is called prolepsis. The authors define it: "Prolepsis. A narrative manoeuvre which consist in anticipating or relating in advance an event which is later from the point of view of the story" (p.96)

⁷⁵ Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, p.135.

⁷⁶ *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.198

Verse 24

From verse 24 to 29 Judah refers to the conversation with his father regarding Benjamin going to Egypt and Jacob's reaction and resistance about sending Benjamin.

In verse 24 Judah presents his father as a servant of Joseph. It recalls Gen 37:10 when Jacob reacts to Joseph's dream: "*Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?*"

When Judah says: "*we told him the words of my lord*" he is referring to Joseph's wish to see Benjamin as a prior requirement to sell them food⁷⁷.

Verses 25 and 26

Jacob knew the condition to buy food from Egypt. But Jacob tried to ignore it. When Jacob told his children: "*Go again; buy us a little food*" immediately they reply that they cannot go to Egypt without Benjamin.

This is the third time (vv.21, 23) that the condition to buy food in Egypt was repeated in the speech. Judah tries to show Joseph that his command was fulfilled and obeyed even against Jacob's will and the danger to his life.

Verse 27

The expression "*my wife*" shows Jacob's favouritism towards Rachel over Leah and his concubines. Similar expressions are in Gen 29:21, 28: 46:19; 28:18; 29:30. Speiser comments: "Literally 'my wife' either in the sense of 'my chosen / favorite wife' or 'that particular wife'".⁷⁸

⁷⁷ The verb "told" in Hebrew text is a verb hiphil waw consecutive imperfect. It indicates the continuity of speech, where Judah is reporting to Joseph what they said to their father Jacob, namely, the requirement that Joseph demanded them to buy more food.

⁷⁸ E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*. Volume 1. Third Edition, Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1983, p.334.

This same type of favoritism Jacob has for Joseph (Gen 37:3, 4). This favoritism caused enmity between Joseph and his brothers (Gen 37:4,20). Then this favoritism is passed to Benjamin. This same favoritism of Jacob for Rachel caused rivalry between Rachel and Leah (Gen 30:1-24).

This favoritism produced a dysfunctional family and the dysfunctionality characterizes the entire Jacob's family story, from start to finish.

Verses 28 and 29

Verse 28 is a repetition of Gen 37:33, here Jacob thinks that Joseph was killed and torn to pieces by a fierce animal. Both verses 28 and 29 are repetitions of Gen 42:38.

The phrase "*Surely he has been torn to pieces*" (verse 28) in the Hebrew text is formed by the same verbal root repeated with different verbal modes and preceded by an adverbial particle. This construction of the text emphasizes and assures the veracity of the events which occurred to Joseph. In other words, Jacob was fully convinced of Joseph's death. About the adverbial particle, Bruce K. Waltke quoting Holladay says: "has a general emphatic sense indicating a sudden recognition in contrast to what was theretofore assumed"⁷⁹

"*he has been torn to pieces*" When Judah repeats Jacob's words, he knows that it is not true but that he and his brothers had sold Joseph as a slave.⁸⁰

"*you will bring down my gray hairs in evil to Sheol*". Judah is reporting to Joseph what his father had said when he and his brothers told his father that they must take Benjamin to Egypt. With this expression Jacob is blaming his children and this involves Joseph because he is insisting that Benjamin must remain in Egypt but if Benjamin does not return to Jacob, sorrow will end his life.

⁷⁹ B. K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990, p.670.

⁸⁰ Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p.222

There are things that Judah and his brothers do not know. The narrator uses this secrecy or reticence in order to show the readers that Judah's speech also includes Joseph in the life of Jacob because they are both Jacob's children. In this way Joseph is receiving the message that he will be responsible if his father dies.

The Hebrew refers to the old age of Jacob by means of a metonymy: “*my gray hairs*” (v.29). This could be in order to emphasize the physical and psychological aspect of Jacob's life condition due to his grief.

Many times the Hebrew word שְׁאוֹל (*sheol*) is not translated, but transliterated. In Hebrew it is described as follows “Fundamentally is a place, one beneath the earth's surface to which people descended at death...the common use of יָרַד (yarad) with hiphil suggest that people go to *sheol* against their will”⁸¹ and this is the case in this verse. So, Jacob says that he will down to *sheol* against his will. The LXX translates this word as ἄδης (*hades*), and its more simple meaning is “the underworld as the place of the dead.”⁸² Jacob fears that his sorrow for his children will lead him to the underworld. By saying this Jacob is expressing his fear and Judah wants to transmit the same feeling to Joseph.

Verses 30 and 31

Judah predicts what would happen if Benjamin does not come back to his father, he could die⁸³; because Jacob's life is strongly bound up to Benjamin.⁸⁴

Jacob seems to have found some comfort with Benjamin for the loss of Joseph. Jacob developed a strong dependence on Benjamin. In the Hebrew and Greek text, the word “*to bind*”⁸⁵ is a word to indicate a strong and deep relation between two people. This

⁸¹ Willem A. VanGemeren, , Ed., *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, volume 4, First published in the UK, Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1997, p.6.

⁸² F. Wilbur Gingrich, *Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1957, p.4.

⁸³ Wenhan, *Genesis 16-50*, p.427.

⁸⁴ Westermann, *Joseph: Studies of the Joseph stories in Genesis*, p.89.

⁸⁵ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Based on the lexicon of William Gesenius, translated by Edward Robinson. Reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961, p.905. קָשַׁר (*qashar*): bind, league together. Lust-Eynikel-Hauspie, A Greek-

dependence could have been shown in the way Benjamin care for and gave attention to his father. The biblical text does not say anything about this; neither does the narrator give descriptions of Benjamin's personality.

Verse 32

This verse is an introduction to the following verses because here Judah says that he himself is the guarantor of Benjamin before his father. The Hebrew verb פָּרַב ('arab) is to "pledge" in Gen 43:9 and 44:32. Robin Wakely comments: "Twice the vb. is used of a man going surety for another in the sense of furnishing a guarantee of a person's safety by standing in his place."⁸⁶ In the same sense this verb is used by Judah, who guaranteed Benjamin's life before his father.

Brown, Driver and Briggs⁸⁷ say that the verb *pledge* means *mixture, mixed company, also interwoven with warp*. Such explanations give the idea of a strong engagement of Judah in Benjamin's and Jacob's life, to the point, that Judah was ready to exchange his life for Benjamin's and avoid Jacob's grief and death.

Verse 33

As Judah argues before Joseph about the precarious condition of his father, Judah steps up his argument offering himself as a slave in Benjamin's place. Judah is willing to rescue his youngest brother and this way save his father's life from a certain death. Judah addresses Joseph and says: "if you wish out of principle, to retain someone as a slave⁸⁸, choose me"⁸⁹.

English Lexicon of the Septuagint (LEH). Quoted in BibleWorks 8. εκκρεμαννυμι (*ekremannumi*): to depend upon. Liddell, and Scott, comp. *A Greek – English Lexicon*, p.510. εκκρεμαννυμι: to hang from, upon a thing.

⁸⁶ VanGemeren, Ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, volume 3, p.314,315.

⁸⁷ Brown, Driver, Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.786

⁸⁸ Scherman & Zlotowitz, *Bereishis: Genesis Section II [vol.1 (b)]*, p.1956, 1957. They take record from Jewish book; this book imagines Judah's speech before Joseph: "One who buys a slave and discovers that he is a thief sends him back, yet you would force a thief to be your servant! You must have some sinister design. I you want him as a personal attendant, I am more skilled than he."

⁸⁹ Scherman & Zlotowitz, *Bereishis: Genesis Section II [vol.1 (b)]*, p.1957.

Both in the Hebrew⁹⁰ (תַּחַת : *tachath*) and Greek text, the expression “*remain instead*” means *instead of, in place of*. So, Judah would stay below Joseph’s authority as his slave.

This text shows a deep and real change of Judah. In the past he had sold his brother Joseph, now he is willing to give his life for his brother Benjamin and also to save his father’s life. Some biblical commentators, like O’Brien, say that Judah “abandons any concern for his personal reputation and focuses exclusively on his commitment to Benjamin and Jacob.”⁹¹

Sternberg also comments: “Judah feels for his father that he begs to sacrifice himself for a brother more loved than himself.”⁹² In the same sense Delitzsch notes “he, by whose advice Joseph was sold as slave, condemns himself to slavery, for the sake of saving Benjamin.”⁹³

Judah is asking Joseph for mercy when he offers himself to stay as a slave in Benjamin’s place. The Hebrew word נָא (*na*) indicates *pray*⁹⁴ or supplicate, therefore biblical versions translate this as “*please*” or “*pray*.” So Judah is not asking for justice but mercy because Benjamin was found guilty and hence Benjamin has to pay his blame. But Judah offers to pay the price with his own life, and in this way, he tries to obtain Joseph’s mercy.

This verse shows Judah as a character that had developed from a callous man to a sensitive man. And he understood the value of the family because he himself had suffered the death of his children (Gen 38). Now he was watching the suffering of his

⁹⁰ Brown, Driver, Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.1065.

⁹¹ O’Brien, The contribution of Judah speech, Genesis 44:18-34, to the characterization of Joseph, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Jul 97, Vol. 59 Issue 3, p429.

⁹² Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p.308.

⁹³ Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis*. Vol II. Translated by Sophia Taylor. Original published by T & T. Clark, 1888. Reprint, Minneapolis: Klock&Klock Christian Publishers, 1978, p.327.

⁹⁴ Brown, Driver, Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.609.

Father and family because of the evil action that he and his brothers had made. He was willing to give his own life to save his brother, father and family.

Verse 34

Judah ends his speech with another rhetorical question: *“For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me?”* The response now is in Joseph’s hands. With the first rhetorical question (v.19) Judah develops his argumentation but with the last question he forces Joseph to an immediate response. Judah is asking Joseph to liberate Benjamin and to take him as a slave. This is the response that Judah is waiting to hear from Joseph.

This verse is in the first person; Judah is the subject in the whole verse. It indicates that Judah is persuading Joseph to take him as his slave. Judah’s purpose was the liberation of Benjamin and to achieve his purpose he had to stay as a slave.

This verse contrast with the verse 17 when Joseph says to him: *“But as for you, go up in peace to your father.”* And in verse 34 he responds *“For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the evil that would find my father.”* Judah cannot return in peace because his father’s life is in danger. Harris comments: “Judah knows that there will be no peace, no shalom, for his family if Benjamin does not return to Jacob.”⁹⁵

This and the previous verses show that Judah is willing to give his life for his father and Benjamin, the favorite son of Jacob. Judah appears to want to please the favoritism of his father because of his love for him. Sternberg comments: “that Judah should adduce the father’s favoritism as the ground for self-sacrifice is such an irresistible proof of filial devotion that it breaks down Joseph’s last defenses.”⁹⁶ And von Rad states: “Judah now sees the danger completely from his father’s viewpoint and is ready even to surrender his own life in order to protect that of Benjamin.”⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Harris, Genesis 44:18-34, *Between Text and Sermon, Interpretation* 52 no 2 Ap 1998, p.179.

⁹⁶ Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p.308.

⁹⁷ Von Rad, *Genesis, A Commentary*, p.395.

This speech is the reversal in the story and this speech will produce the discovery in the Joseph story. Delitzsch asserts: “The moment for the most touching and sacred scene of recognition...has arrived.”⁹⁸ In this same sense Sternberg comments: “leads to a perfectly Aristotelian turning point, a discovery with peripety”.⁹⁹

Finally, Judah ends his speech deeply anxious because his father could die if Benjamin does not return to him. Sellee comments: “He remains consistently deferential in accordance with court language except when he is overcome by his emotional focus on his father’s terrifying fate if Benjamin does not return with his brothers”.¹⁰⁰

Then following this emotive and persuasive Judah’s speech, comes the reaction and response of Joseph.

1.2. Pericope of Joseph’s speech, Gen 45:1-8

This pericope runs through verse 15, but in this closed reading it will only be considered until verse 8 because this part constitutes the core of Joseph’s self-disclosure to his brothers. This pericope is the *αναγνωρισίς*¹⁰¹ (*anagnorisis*) of the Joseph story because in the story is produced a change from ignorance to knowledge.¹⁰²

This recognition is Joseph’s response to Judah’s speech and also everything that Joseph saw and heard from his brothers, until that moment. It persuaded him that his brothers had changed¹⁰³, now Joseph could trust in his brothers, as Keil and Delitzsch say:

⁹⁸ Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis*, Vol. II, p.327.

⁹⁹ Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p.308.

¹⁰⁰ Sellee, *The Theme (s) of the Joseph Story: a Literary Analysis*, p.160.

¹⁰¹ Recognition or discovery.

¹⁰² Prince Gerald, *A Dictionary of Narratology*. Lincoln, London: University Of Nebraska Press, 2003, p.82 “Recognition in Aristotelian terminology, a change from ignorance to knowledge experienced by a protagonist, brought about by events in the plot and resulting in turning of the action. According to Aristotle recognition (discovery, *anagnorisis*) is along with peripety (*peripeteia*, reversal) the most potent means of securing the tragic effect. Furthermore, it is most effective when closely allied to peripety.”

¹⁰³ Herman Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis*. Translated by W. H. Carruth. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1901, p.37. Gunkel’s opinion is different; according to him “Joseph’s brethren are not at all reformed in the course of the story, but simply punished.”

“After this appeal, in which Judah speaking for his brethren... had given a sufficient proof of a change of mind, the true conversion that had taken place in themselves.”¹⁰⁴ Joseph’s speech leads the reader to the main theme: the recognition or discovery of Joseph.

Verse 1

Judah’s speech caused a dramatic reaction in Joseph, so the text reads: “*Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him*” After listening to Judah, Joseph was desperate. O’Brien comments: “a measure of the profound effect that Judah’s speech has on Joseph is Joseph’s desperate but failed bid to retain some control by demanding privacy”.¹⁰⁵ Judah’s speech had achieved its purpose: Joseph’s heart was touched. Before Joseph had succeeded in hiding his emotions (Gen 42:24 and 43:30) but now that was not possible anymore, Joseph could not control his emotions in front of his brothers.

Prior to Joseph making himself known to his brothers, he orders the Egyptian servants to leave the house, so he can stay alone with his brothers “in order to make this a personal family occasion in which they could speak freely about the past without it becoming public knowledge”¹⁰⁶. And even though “the Egyptians can certainly hear him, but they take no part in what now happens between the brothers.”¹⁰⁷

Now Joseph does not need an interpreter, as in other opportunities. The reader can assume that Joseph spoke Hebrew because when he was sold as a slave he was already seventeen.

The phrase “*not control himself*” in the Hebrew¹⁰⁸ and Greek¹⁰⁹ verbs are reflexives to indicate that Joseph did not control his inner emotions after he heard Judah’s speech.

¹⁰⁴ Keil & Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, volume I, The Pentateuch, p.365.

¹⁰⁵ O’Brien, The contribution of Judah’s speech, Genesis 44:18-34, to the characterization of Joseph, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Jul 97, Vol. 59 Issue 3, p429.

¹⁰⁶ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p.427.

¹⁰⁷ Westermann, *Genesis 37-50, A Commentary*, p.142.

¹⁰⁸ Brown, Driver, Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.67.

The expression “*made himself known*” in the Hebrew (יָדָע: *yada*)¹¹⁰ and Greek (αναγνωριζω¹¹¹: *anagnorizo*) verbs are also reflexive. Here the secrecy of Joseph’s identity was revealed to his brothers because Joseph unveiled himself before them. As Friberg translates “make oneself known again, cause to be recognized.” and Muraoka: “to reveal one’s identity.”

Verse 2

It is third time that Joseph weeps; previously Joseph hid his weeping (Gen. 42:24, 43:30). But this time it is not possible.

Concerning “*he wept aloud, so that*”, this expresses loudness.¹¹² So, Joseph’s voice became a strong weeping. The Egyptians heard Joseph weep while they were outside and soon they told the news to Pharaoh. So Pharaoh and the Egyptians find out what happened with Joseph and his brothers.

Verse 1 and 2 describe the ambiance and the emotional climate where the scene takes place between Joseph and his brothers. It is a noisy family celebration.

Verse 3

This is the great moment of the story, when Joseph pronounces “*I am Joseph*” the story turns in an opposite direction.

The Septuagint uses an emphatic personal pronoun to emphasize the identity of a person, Joseph says: “*I am Joseph*” (εγω εμι Ιωσηφ: *ego eimi Ioseph*). This is his first

¹⁰⁹ T. Muraoka. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: (Chiefly of the Pentateuch and the Twelve Prophets)*. Louvain, Paris, Dudley, Ma: Preeters, 2002, p.36.

¹¹⁰ William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden, 1971.

¹¹¹ Friberg, *Analytical Greek Lexicon*. Quoted in BibleWorks 8, 2009. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, p.28

¹¹² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 18-50*, p.571. He translates: “*But he wept so loudly*”.

identification that he makes to them later, on he gives other details. Friberg states, it is: “as an intensive pronoun to emphasize identity, setting the individual person or thing apart from others.”¹¹³

The self-identification of Joseph is sudden. His brothers had been waiting for a different denouement. They had not been expecting that the ruler of Egypt would say: *I am Joseph*.

Before Joseph’s brothers react, he asks them about his father: “*Is my father still alive?*” This question show the effect caused by Judah’s speech on Joseph. His father was his first concern. Jacob’s life was the main argument in Judah’s speech.

Previously Joseph said: “*your father*” but now he says: “*my father*” and he inquiries for him. As Ross says: “Joseph’s weeping aloud and his immediate inquiry about his father shows that strongly desired to be reconciled with his brothers and united with his family.”¹¹⁴

When Joseph self-discloses himself to his brothers, they are stunned. The Hebrew term to dismayed is בָּהַל (bahal)¹¹⁵ and the Greek term in the LXX is: ταρασσω (tarasso)¹¹⁶; in both texts the verb is passive which indicate that Joseph’s self-disclosure had caused a strong fear in them. They are terrified in the presence of Joseph because he is the governor of Egypt and their lives are now in Joseph’s hands. If before they had reasons to fear Joseph (Gen 42:28, 35; 43:18; 44:13) now much more because Joseph could take revenge.

Verse 4

None of the brothers move back from Joseph’s presence. Joseph had this to say to them: “*Come near to me, please*” The Hebrew text uses a particle to indicate “to pray”

¹¹³ Friberg, *Analytical Greek Lexicon*. Quoted in BibleWorks 8, 2009

¹¹⁴ Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, p.672.

¹¹⁵ Brown, Driver, Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.96.

¹¹⁶ Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, p.548.

or “supplicate”¹¹⁷ and the English version translates it as “*please*” or “*I pray you*” (KJV). It is totally the opposite from when Joseph recognized his brothers and spoke roughly to them (Gen. 42:7, 30). This phrase shows a radical change in Joseph attitude towards his brothers.

Joseph repeats his identity and adds: “*Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.*” With this last expression Joseph confirms his identification before his brothers. Only Joseph and his brothers knew about him being sold to Egypt. This expression must have increased his brothers’ fear.

According to O’Brien, forgiveness and reconciliation “are hinted at in 45:4 when the brothers respond to Joseph’s invitation to come near.”¹¹⁸ O’Brien makes this commentary for the following reason: “Commentators have noted that there is no apology from the brothers for the wrong they did to Joseph, and that there is also no expression of forgiveness or reconciliation on the part of Joseph. However, the lack of explicit treatment of these themes is in keeping with the art of reticence in the story.”¹¹⁹ Gen 45:15 and 50:15-21 confirm Joseph’s forgiveness to his brothers.

Verse 5

Judah started his speech asking Joseph: “*let not your anger burn against your servant*” (44:18) and Joseph also says the same to his brothers: “*now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves*”. But his brothers seem to be thinking that Joseph would be plotting his revenge against them. Gen 50:15 shows their disbelief about Joseph’s pardon to them.

Commenting about forgiveness Westermann says: “Joseph does not want to diminish in any way the brothers’ guilt, much less deny it; rather it remains heavy on them, as 44:16 shows. Joseph puts all that was set in motion in Jacob’s family by his brothers’

¹¹⁷ Brown, Driver, Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.609.

¹¹⁸ O’Brien, The contribution of Judah speech, Genesis 44:18-34, to the characterization of Joseph, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Jul 97, Vol. 59 Issue 3, p429.

¹¹⁹ O’Brien, The contribution of Judah speech, Genesis 44:18-34, to the characterization of Joseph, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Jul 97, Vol. 59 Issue 3, p429.

crime into a broader context, that of God who protects and sustains life; he thus lets his brothers know that he has forgiven them.”¹²⁰

Joseph’s self-revelation caused the deepest concern in his brothers and these two verbs show the physical and psychological dimensions: *distressed* shows inner emotions¹²¹ and *angry* is an external demonstration of this inner emotion¹²². According to Wenham, this last verb shows “the most intense emotion, a mixture of rage and anguish.”¹²³

The verb *distressed*¹²⁴, both in the Hebrew text (בָּצַב: *'atsab*) and in the LXX: (λυπεω: *lupeo*) are passives. It indicates that Joseph’s brothers were emotionally affected when Joseph was made known to them. The word *angry* in the Hebrew text is the verb (הָרָה: *hara*), “in that it emphasizes the "kindling" of anger, like the kindling of a fire, or the heat of the anger, once started.”¹²⁵ In the LXX is an adjective (σκληρος¹²⁶: *skleros*) translated as *hard* or *harsh*. This adjective is followed by a passive verb (φανω¹²⁷: *faino*) and is translated as *appear*. The Greek sentence is: μηδε σκληρον υμιν φανητω which is translated as: *not seem hard to you*¹²⁸. Joseph says his brothers should not be harsh with themselves for what they did with him.¹²⁹

Then Joseph says to his brothers: “because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.” All events were God's work. Calvin says: “This is the reason why

¹²⁰ Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, p.144.

¹²¹ VanGemeren, ed. *Dictionary of Old Testament & Exegesis*, Vol. 2, p.266.

¹²² Hamilton, *The book of Genesis Chapters 18-50*, p.572.

¹²³ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p.428.

¹²⁴ Gary Yamasaki. *Perspective Criticism: Point of View and Evaluative Guidance in Biblical Narrative*. Eugene OR: Cascade Books, 2012, p. 38. By means of a *verba sentiendi* the narrator introduces us in the Psychological state of Joseph’s brothers.

¹²⁵ R. Laird Harris, ed. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Volume 1. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980, p.322.

¹²⁶ Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, p.514.

¹²⁷ Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, p.579.

¹²⁸ Launcelot Lee Brenton, Trans. *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament and Apocrypha*, with and English translation. Reprinted, London: Samuel Bagster and Son Limited. 1976, p.62.

¹²⁹ Hamilton translates “reproach” p.572.

he repeats himself, that God had sent him for their preservation; that by counsel of God himself he had been sent beforehand into Egypt to preserve them alive.”¹³⁰

In Judah’s speech God is not mentioned, but in Joseph’s speech God appears as the main character, the hero of the story because he drove and controlled all events. He gives salvation to Jacob’s family, not Joseph. The triumph is of God. The evil actions cannot go against him. He is the victorious hero. Three times, in this speech is repeated by Joseph that it was God who sent him to Egypt. (v.5,7,8). These repetitions highlight God’s work in the entire the Joseph story.

There are some interesting commentaries of biblical scholars: Von Rad comments: “God’s hand which directs all the confusion of human guilt ultimately toward a gracious goal.”¹³¹ Skinner says: “The profoundly religious conviction which recognizes the hand of God, not merely in miraculous interventions, but in the working out of divine ends through human agency and what we call secondary causes.”¹³² Ross states: “Joseph’s whole purpose was to ensure that the remnant of God’s people would be saved in this crisis.”¹³³ So in this speech is unveiled the enigma of the entire story. Westermann comments: “It is about God’s rule over human activity, God’s guidance of destinies which can totally transform human plans and make out of them something which corresponds to God’s plan.”¹³⁴

The LXX translates as *αποστελλω* (*apostello*) the same word used in New Testament to refer to Jesus’ apostles. This word points out to a person sent on a mission, sent with a purpose, and sent with authority.¹³⁵ In this way the Greek text describes the mission and purpose of Joseph for which God sent him to Egypt.

¹³⁰ Calvin, John *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, Volume First. Translated by John King. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979, p.377.

¹³¹ Von Rad. *Genesis: A Commentary*, p.398.

¹³² Skinner, John, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*. Second edition 1930, lasted impression 1980. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1980, p.487.

¹³³ Ross, *Creation and Blessings*, p.673.

¹³⁴ Westermann, *Joseph: Studies of the Joseph stories in Genesis*, p.96.

¹³⁵ Friberg, *Analytical Greek Lexicon*. Quoted in BibleWorks 8, 2009.

In this conscious act of God's presence is given reconciliation, mercy, recognition and divine provision. In Judah's speech are shown human troubles, contrary to Joseph's speech which shows divine response. In Judah's speech is shown a dysfunctional family, but in Joseph's speech that dysfunctional family is reconciled. In Judah's speech God's work is ignored, but in Joseph's speech God's work is recognized in each event that occurred.

Verse 6

This verse describes the accomplishing of Pharaoh's dreams (Gen 41). This famine is described in the severest of expressions "*in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.*" "The rhythm of sowing and harvest, which sustain life, is disturbed for a long period."¹³⁶

Verse 7

The second part this verse has three important words: *Remnant*, this "term denotes descendants who survive a great catastrophe."¹³⁷ *Many*, which literally means 'great,' that is "with reference to something supernatural."¹³⁸ *Survivors*, this term means escape, deliverance. These three words show that Jacob's family will be saved from the catastrophe of famine by a divine act of rescue. This is similar to Noah's, Abraham's and Lot's divine rescue.

Verse 8

Joseph gives all the merit to God. These events were led by God in order to save his family. Also Joseph told his brothers that God gave him honour when he was made "*father to Pharaoh*"¹³⁹, "*lord of all his house*" and "*ruler over all the land of Egypt*".

¹³⁶ Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, p. 145.

¹³⁷ Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p.563. Hamilton, *The book of Genesis Chapters 18-50*, p.572.

¹³⁸ Speiser, *Genesis*, Vol. 1, p.338.

¹³⁹ Several authors agree that this expression refers to his role as counsellor. "Chief adviser" (Wenham), "his outstanding wisdom and ability" (Hamilton) "his most confidential counsellor and friends" (Keil and Delitzsch), "He is 'father to the Pharaoh,' inasmuch as he counsels him like father" (Westermann).

All this honour is in order to benefit his family with salvation. Joseph gives all the glory to God, and not to himself.

2. Conclusion

In these speeches the two main human characters of the Joseph story are faced. This occurs in the denouement of the story. From this point the story has a radical change. The story reaches its climax and is given the reversal and recognition; reversal and recognition produce repentance. i.e. the characters change their ways of thinking and attitude about Joseph and God. When these things are achieved the result is the reconciliation and unity of Jacob's family. So, this dysfunctional family is reconciled.

Each time that God appears in the story the reader can see that he is in control of the situation. God is the one who drives the characters, times and situations according to his plans. From the perspective of God nothing happens by chance, but each event has its purpose under his plan. He is who leads the things to a happy end. God is the hero of the story.

The story of Joseph is a story that has influenced the people of Israel through centuries. This story must have encouraged many people in moments when they were discouraged about God's promise and when some did not believe, for example in the Babylonian captivity.

This story continues to have power to encourage the church today because the Joseph story shows the same things that happen to Christian believers in our time. Many times, Christian believers doubt that God's presence is with them. Also, in some measure every Christian family has its problems and in this sense is dysfunctional. So, the Joseph story can change the way of thinking and the attitudes of believers regarding God and his plans to preserve them. The believers also could change their attitudes and way of thinking regarding the Christian family.

See the analytic outline these pericopes on the page 110.

CHAPTER 3

LITERARY ANALYSIS OF GEN 44:18-34; 45:1-8.

Then of the close reading is necessary to make a literary analysis in order to see the narrative elements contained in these two pericopes. The close reading gave us the biblical basis to the sermon; the literary analysis will give us the form for the narrative sermon. Also this literary analysis allows us to try these two pericopes according to its literary genre: narrative texts.

This chapter examines narrative elements: unity, secrecy, mimesis, reversal and recognition; and typology.

1. Narrative elements

1.1. The characters in these pericopes

God. He is mentioned by Joseph. God was he who sent Joseph to Egypt in order to save Jacob's family. According to Joseph, God was in control of the events that happened to Jacob's family.

Joseph. He appears as an antagonist in the first part of these pericopes (44:18-34). In the second part he is the reconciler and saviour in favour of his family (45:1-8) and in this way, he becomes the hero¹⁴⁰ in these pericopes.

Judah. He appears as a protagonist in the first part of these pericopes He intercedes in favour of his father and younger brother, and offers his life in place of Benjamin.

Jacob. He does not have a direct role in these pericopes. He is only mentioned by Judah in relation to the sorrow that he felt for Joseph and Benjamin and his possible death if Benjamin does not return to him from Egypt. Jacob can be qualified as a block character because he "is invariable throughout the narrative."¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Jan P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide*. Translated from Dutch by Ineke Smit. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999, p.78.

¹⁴¹ Marguerat & Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories*, p.60.

Joseph's brothers: The rest of Joseph's brothers are present before him, but their role is passive¹⁴².

1.2. Plot of Gen 44:18-34 to 45:1-8

The Greek *μυθος*¹⁴³ (*muthos*) “that is, an ordered sequence of events.”¹⁴⁴ i.e. the organization of events that happen during the story. To organize the story plot I take the model of the quinary scheme, which Marguerat and Bourquin¹⁴⁵ use. I think that this scheme seems more symmetric and harmonic in its parts and so suits the Analytic Outline (see at the end of the chapter 2) .

I. Initial situation¹⁴⁶: The fears that Benjamin stays as Joseph's slave, 44:18.

The start of Judah's speech is bound with the previous verses of chapter 44. When Joseph's silver cup was found in Benjamin's sack, he is accused of stealing and punished to remain a slave. This problem provokes the dramatic plot of Judah's speech. Judah and his brothers are afraid for Benjamin and their ill father.

II. Complication¹⁴⁷: Judah offers himself in place of Benjamin, 44:19-34.

In this part Judah intercedes in favour of the liberation of Benjamin. Judah appeals to Jacob's age, his sorrow for his lost son and his love for Benjamin. Judah says that if Benjamin would not come back to be with his father, he could die. Finally, Judah offers himself in place of Benjamin because he is guarantor for Benjamin's life before his father.

¹⁴² Marguerat & Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories*, p.60.

¹⁴³ Liddell and Scott, Comp. *A Greek – English Lexicon*, p.1151: Tale, story, narrative.

¹⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.10.

¹⁴⁵ Marguerat & Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories*, p.43-45

¹⁴⁶ “Initial situation (or exposition). Gives the readers the pieces of information necessary to understand the situation that story is to change. This exposition specifies the who, what and (sometimes) how” (Marguerat and Bourquin, p.43).

¹⁴⁷ “Complication (or knot) triggers off the action. It is here that the dramatic tension usually begins. The detonator can be the statement of a difficulty, a conflict an incident, a hindrance in the way of the resolution of a problem.” (Marguerat and Bourquin, p.44).

III. Transforming action¹⁴⁸: Joseph makes himself known to his brothers, 45:1-3.

Joseph can no longer contain his emotions and he weeps aloud, he identifies himself before his brothers, by saying: I am Joseph. From this act of identification the course of the story changed for better for the whole family.

IV. Denouement or resolution¹⁴⁹: Joseph and his brothers are reconciled, 45:4-7.

Joseph forgives his brothers and he says that all happened according to God's plans. God was the one who sent him to Egypt to save the family from the severe famine.

V. Final situation¹⁵⁰: Joseph is governor of Egypt, 45:8.

This condition of Joseph in Egypt ensures the survival of Jacob's family

1.3. Setting

The story elapses between Canaan and Egypt in the context of a dysfunctional family.

1.4. Narrator's viewpoint

The Joseph story is connected with God's promise to Abraham (48:15). So this story is from the perspective of God's promise and its fulfilment. The narrator shows that God took Jacob's family to Egypt and Egypt was the place where God made a nation of Jacob's family (46:3,4). Afterwards they would return to Palestine to conquer their territory. Both Jacob and Joseph died believing in this promise (49:29-31; 49:29-33; 50:24,25cf Ex 13:19). Also this story is connected with the exodus by means of 46:27 (cf Ex 1:5), where it is states how many people entered into Egypt, cf. Exodus 1:7, 12:37.

¹⁴⁸ "Transforming action aims at removing the difficulty or the shortage or the disturbance announced by the story. The transforming dynamic can consist of a particular action or a long process of change. Classically, the turning point of the story is situated here." (Marguerat and Bourquin, p.44).

¹⁴⁹ "The denouement or resolution is a stage symmetrical with the complication. It states the resolution of the problem indicated. It describe the effects of the transforming action on the people concerned or the way in which the situation is re-established in its former state"(Marguerat and Bourquin, p.44).

¹⁵⁰ "The final situation sets out the recognition of the new state (after the elimination of the difficulty) or the return to normality (after the disappearance of the disturbance). This stage, which Greek tragedy called *katastrophe*, describes the new situation after narrative tension set up by the narrative has been relaxed." (Marguerat and Bourquin, p.44).

The author attempts to change the attitude of the people regarding God's plan for them. People must know that God continues with his plan to save, because he is sovereign over human action. This sovereignty of God must encourage their faith in God's promise. People must know that God is with them although he does not seem to be among them.

1.5. Timings

The narrator only quotes the specific time of Joseph's and Jacob's ages. According to these dates the story covers a lapse of 93 years, from the 17 years of Joseph until his death at 110 years. Joseph was made governor of Egypt when he was 30. Jacob lives in Egypt 17 years (47:28). 47:9 indicates there is a lapse of 7 years between his arrival in Egypt and his visit to Pharaoh. Another reference to time is the famine and expressions as "*it happened at that time*" (37:1), "*meanwhile, now, time after this*, etc.

The author does not say at what era Israel was going through when he told this story, but possibly it is period of discouragement, when they lost hope in God's promise.

1.6. Climax of these two pericopes

This occurs in 45:1-3, the story changes in opposite directions when Joseph's identity is revealed and God's plan to save the Jacob's family. Here all the characters arrive at *μετανοια* (*metanoia*). This is the most dramatic moment, which makes characters change deeply their thought and attitude. It is the powerful moment in the story.

2. UNITY

This point examines the unity of these two pericopes in relation to the whole of the Joseph story.

2.1. The Documentary Hypothesis

This hypothesis doubts the unity of the Joseph story because the story would be formed by documents J, E and P¹⁵¹ and in turn, these documents would depend on the

¹⁵¹ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p.345; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, p.18, 19.

subordinate literary sources.¹⁵² Joseph is a fragmentary story¹⁵³ and synthesis¹⁵⁴ of these documents. The final form of the Joseph story would be an editorial composition.

According to some Documentary Hypothesis scholars these two speeches belong to different literary sources; Judah's speech belongs to J and Joseph's speech to E,¹⁵⁵ but the rhetorical and structure features indicate the opposite because Joseph's speech is the obvious result of Judah's speech. The narrator is making the two speeches the climax of the story; therefore these pericopes cannot come from different sources. So these pericopes are intimately linked with each other and with the whole of the story.

2.2. Genesis 38

The chapter 38 is the most controversial chapter regarding its unity with the story. Many authors tend to see it as an interruption in the whole of the story. Von Rad comments: "Every attentive reader can see that the story of Judah and Tamar has no connection at all with the strictly organized Joseph story at whose beginning it is now inserted."¹⁵⁶ In the same sense think Longman¹⁵⁷, Garret¹⁵⁸, and others. But, these scholar quoted do not consider that without this chapter the reader could not understand completely the character of Judah because this chapter shows the beginning of Judah's transformation. So, Gen 38 and these two pericopes are intimately bound.

For Judah Gen 38 represents a personal change in his life, because from this moment the reader can note that Judah is a different person. Judah now acts with goodness to his brothers and father.

¹⁵² Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis*, p.124,125.

¹⁵³ Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p.348.

¹⁵⁴ Westerman, *Genesis 37-50*, p.18,19.

¹⁵⁵ Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p.419,420.

¹⁵⁶ Von Rad, *Genesis*, p.356.

¹⁵⁷ Longman, *How to Read Genesis*, p.151.

¹⁵⁸ Garret, *Rethinking Genesis*, p.171.

Instead Alter links chapters 37 and 38 with these two pericopes by means of key words.¹⁵⁹ Here three key words which are bound with the idea of knowledge:

- *Recognize* (נָכַר : *nakar*). In Gen 37:32, 33 this verb is used when Jacob recognized Joseph's robe and in Gen 38:25, 26 this verb is also used when Judah recognizes his things which were given to Tamar.¹⁶⁰ This verb is also encountered in Gen 42:7, 8 when Joseph recognizes his brothers but they do not recognize him.
- *Know* (יָדָע : *yada'*)¹⁶¹ in Gen 45:1 this verb is used when the narrator says that Joseph made himself known to his brothers. Also this verb occurs in Gen 38:26 but in the sense of a sexual relation. It is between Judah and Tamar.
- *I am Joseph* (אֲנִי יוֹסֵף : *ani Yosef*) in Gen 45: 3 this personal pronoun is used together with a proper noun when Joseph makes himself known his brothers.

2.3. The characters

The characters are linked to the whole of the story. They are from the beginning to the end, each with his role in the story. In these two pericopes, they are together in the moment of the denouement, except Jacob who is absent but despite his absence he has an important background role in these pericopes. So, in these pericopes Joseph, Judah and the rest of brothers, also the Egyptians, Jacob and Pharaoh are mentioned, and finally God, who is the causative one of all events. This conjunction of characters binds these two pericopes with the whole of the story.

2.4. Repetitions

These two pericopes repeat many issues which are repeated before and after of this text. These repetitions showed the link with the whole of the story.

- The scene of Joseph's recognition in 45:1,3,4 before his brothers. It can be compared with the similar scenes in 37:32,33: Jacob recognizes Joseph's clothes, 38:25,26 Judah recognizes his things and his injustice against Tamar and 41:39 Pharaoh recognizes Joseph's wisdom to govern the country.

¹⁵⁹ Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.223,224.

¹⁶⁰ Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.1-11.

¹⁶¹ Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p.198.

- The scene of Jacob's favouritism in 44:20. It is seen in 37:3,4 that he loves Joseph more than his other children, in 42:4 that he loves Benjamin, in 48:14 that he prefers Ephraim more than Manasseh and in 49:8-12 he prefers Judah over his brothers to govern Israel in the future.
- The scene of Jacob's sorrow in 44:22,29,31,34. It is encountered in 37:34,35 with Joseph's sorrow, and in 42:38 with Benjamin's.
- The scene of Joseph's disappearance in 44:20,28. It is seen in 37:33; 42:13,32,36. This scene is related with Jacob's sorrow for Joseph and Benjamin.
- Exigency of Joseph to see Benjamin in 44:21,23,26. It is seen in 42:15,16,20,34; 43:3-5,7-9,29; 44:17. This scene shows Joseph's concern for his youngest brother.
- Jacob's fear of losing Benjamin in 44:29. It is also seen in 42:36,38; 43:6,14.
- Joseph's concern for his father in 45:3. Previously Joseph had asks his brothers about his father in 42:11 and 43:27. In 45:3 it is the first question that Joseph asks his brothers after being made known before his brothers.
- Joseph's feelings for his brothers in 45:2,14,15. In other texts his feelings are shown by means of crying: 42:24; 43:30; 50:17. But in 50:21 says that Joseph spoke kindly to them.
- Brothers' fear in 44:18 and 45:3,5. Also in 42:28,35; 43:18, They have fear concerning the different events that they are going through.
- Brothers' reverence before Joseph in 44:14, 18. It is repetition of 42:26; 43:26,28.
- God's work. In 45:5,7,8: God sent to Joseph to preserve Jacob's family. In 39:2,3,5,21,23: God helps Joseph when he is slave. In Gen 41: God gives Joseph wisdom to interpret dreams. In 44:16: God uncovers the guilt of Joseph's brothers. In 41:38-44 and 45:8,9,13: Joseph is made governor of Egypt.

2.5. Judah and Joseph

These two pericopes are intimately linked with the rest of the story. In the story Judah is shown as an influential leader. In 37:26,27 he persuades his brothers to sell Joseph. In 38:18 he is an important man in Adullam community as is demonstrated in his signet ring, cord and staff. In 43:3-4,8-13 he persuades his father to take Benjamin to Egypt. In 44:14: he leads his brothers before Joseph. In 44: 16,18: he faces Joseph. In his speech he shows the deepest change when he is willing to take Benjamin's place. After his speech, he is an emissary of Jacob before Joseph and finally, Jacob gives Judah the

blessing of the first-born. Moreover, this speech shows a change in Judah in comparison with chapters 37 and 38.

In Joseph's speech it is important how he makes himself known to his brothers, i.e. by his name and the evil actions of his brothers. This way of identification is a key to the unity of these two pericopes because the selling of Joseph by his brothers started the series of events which carry Joseph to Egypt. This evil action is presented in the entire story, from beginning (Gen 37) to end (Gen 50:15). So, when Joseph made himself known before his brothers, he identifies it by means of the evil action against him. In the same way, it is God's plan that is seen through the entire story. So the actions have a complete sequence in the story.¹⁶²

These two pericopes are a unity with the whole story because of the literary structure, the key words, the repetition of scenes and characters' actions show sequences¹⁶³ and this sequence contributes to the unity of the entire story.

3. SECRECY

Secrecy is a quality of any narrative¹⁶⁴ to hide things according to the purposes and intentions of the author. The reader often does not understand the reason of some scenes, statements, characters, numbers, etc. in the story. Frank Kermode¹⁶⁵ has made a study of this subject, and takes as a base Mark's gospel. He takes as examples of secrecy the parables or the young man's apparition covered with a linen cloth, at the moment Jesus's arrest (Mark 14:51-52), etc. He says that their precise senses are a mystery to interpret, because they can have a wide range of meanings. This wide range darkens the meaning of a narrative.¹⁶⁶ The Bible contains many cases like this, which are mysteries, but possibly the original writer and audience knew the precise significance.

¹⁶² Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.1.

¹⁶³ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.1.

¹⁶⁴ The reference is to all kind of narrative, this is not only biblical.

¹⁶⁵ Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative*. Second printing, Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1979.

¹⁶⁶ Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy*, p.23-27.

The wide range of senses, according to Kermode, would be the reason why the Joseph story is interpreted in different ways by scholars. In chapter one of this thesis was seen different interpretations of the Joseph story by only ten authors. These varieties of viewpoints would give support to Kermode. The different authors considered in chapter one give their interpretation according to their theological posture¹⁶⁷, political ideology¹⁶⁸, philosophical position¹⁶⁹ and literary stance.¹⁷⁰

Secrecy can also be called reticence¹⁷¹, reticence and omissions¹⁷², gaps in the text or *paralipsis*¹⁷³ or the unwritten.¹⁷⁴ These nouns indicate the things that the author does not put or are not revealed in his narrative. Marguerat and Bourquin define secrecy: as “a technique by which the narrator deprives the reader of important information, enjoyed, for example, by characters of the story”¹⁷⁵. For example: The narration of Isaac’s sacrifice is silent about Abraham’s feelings or the episode of the selling of Joseph to Midianites is mute on Joseph’s reaction. Sternberg comments on the purpose of such omissions and gaps in the text when he refers to the narrative of Abraham and Isaac: “the focus of interest lies in Abraham’s supreme obedience regardless of any possible thought. His state of mind thus becomes of secondary importance.”¹⁷⁶ Following this, Sternberg’s commentary on Gen 37 excludes any detail about Joseph’s pleading for his life because the goal is to show the evil action of his brothers against him, but Joseph’s pleading is registered in Gen 42:21 when the narrator’s goal is different. In other words, the narrator avoids giving details which could distract the

¹⁶⁷ Greidanus and Patterson focus on the Old Testament from the perspective of the New Testament. Scherman and Zlotowitz focus from a Jewish theological perspective.

¹⁶⁸ Wildavsky and Fung appear to have in mind a political ideological in their interpretation.

¹⁶⁹ Von Rad and Westermann combine an evolutionary and theological perspective.

¹⁷⁰ Alter uses more a literary position than theological position to interpret the Joseph story. Longman and Sellev are the same.

¹⁷¹ Alter, *The Art of Biblical narrative*, p.143-162.

¹⁷² Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p.190-192.

¹⁷³ Marguerat & Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories*, p.130.

¹⁷⁴ Robert Walter Funk, *The poetic of Biblical Narrative*. Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1988, p. 286.

¹⁷⁵ Marguerat & Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories*, p.130.

¹⁷⁶ Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p.192.

reader from the main goal and purpose of the narrative. The technique of reticence motivates the reader to reflect, infer, make his own judgement, and creates greater interest in the narrative. As Rhoads says: “The effect leads the readers to be further involved in figuring out the story so they will be on the inside rather than on the outside of understanding.”¹⁷⁷

Some narrative secrecy in these pericopes

The reader perceives Judah as a changed character in comparison with Judah of chapter 37. In Gen 37 Judah is an evil man; instead in Gen 44 Judah is a good man, to the point that he is willing to take Benjamin’s places as a slave. But the narrator does not say when Judah changed. The narrator is silent about this.

Also Judah in his speech does not mention the selling of Joseph; much less that he was the one who promoted the sale of Joseph. This would be opposite to what the reader perceives in Judah’s personal change.

In Joseph’s speech (Gen 45:1-8) his brothers are dismayed (v.3), distressed and angry with themselves (v.5) but the narrator is silent about their asking for Joseph’s pardon for their evil actions against him. Even if in Gen 45:15 it is understood that Joseph’s brothers talked with him, the text does not reveal the theme of conversation. Readers can suppose it was to ask Joseph’s pardon.

God’s plan. The narrator does not give information about God’s plans by Joseph’s mouth (Gen. 45: 5,7,8,9). In the previous chapters the narrator hides God’s plans from Joseph and his family. Also, why did God have to act by means of an evil act to bring about his plan?

In the Joseph narrative there are things that only the narrator knows, things that the narrator and characters know, and things that the narrator knows but the characters ignore. For example, during Judah’s speech, Joseph’s brothers ignore the fact that Egypt’s ruler is Joseph; and Judah and his brothers ignore that Joseph lives (Gen

¹⁷⁷David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*. Second Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999, p.59.

44:20). Joseph does not know about his father's life. In Joseph's speech, (Gen 45:1) the Egyptians ignore the fact that this group of men in Joseph's house are his brothers.

The text in these two pericopes has many gaps, omissions and secrets. These are a strategy which causes the narrator and the reader to investigate, make inferences and judge the written material.

4. Mimesis, reversal and recognition

4.1. Mimesis

In Judah and Joseph's speeches, the narrator make a masterly mimesis¹⁷⁸ because in Judah's speech, he makes a panoramic view of all events that happened until this moment and in the Joseph's speech, he shows Joseph's attitude to his brothers despite their evil action against him in the past.

Here is necessary a reference to Auerbach¹⁷⁹ who takes this concept of mimesis¹⁷⁹ to make a comparison between biblical narrative and Homeric narrative. Auerbach says that Homeric narrative is fictional because each narrative element is perfectly fixed, the narration has no gaps. Instead the biblical narrative has gaps and apparent contradictions which indicate that the biblical narrative refers to real historical events.

4.2. Reversal and recognition

According to Aristotle reversal and recognition are two essential elements in a story or plot. These two elements have a function in the story and it must be organized in dependence on them.¹⁸⁰

Reversal

The Greek word for reversal is *περιπέτεια* (*peripeteia*). This word indicates a sudden change to an opposite sense,¹⁸¹ or a sudden reversal of circumstances in which the story

¹⁷⁸ Mimesis. Aristotelian concept, which indicates a representation of the reality of actions of characters and these, can be good or bad. (Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.3,4).

¹⁷⁹ Auerbach, *Mimesis*, chapter one: Odysseus' scar, p.3-23.

¹⁸⁰ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.10.

turns¹⁸² 180 degrees, i.e. circumstances take an unexpected change, generally in the opposite direction.

Judah's speech produces the reversal in the Joseph story because from this speech the circumstances in Jacob's family have a deep change. In Gen 37 the narration shows hate between Joseph and his brothers due mainly to Jacob's favouritism for Joseph. Judah is an insensitive character before the suffering of people. He is only interested in himself, as this seen when he suggests the sale of Joseph. To him Joseph's anguish in the pit (Gen 42:21) does not matter. He only wants to make money and throw off his hated brother. Also, in Gen 37, Joseph appears to be a character who takes advantage of his father's favouritism and uses his dreams to annoy his brothers, which increased their hatred to him. Also Jacob contributes to the family conflict because of his favouritism for Joseph. So Gen 37 shows a very conflictive dysfunctional family.

Judah's speech (Gen. 44:18-34) shows two aspects:

First, the tense family relation shown by means of Joseph's request to see Benjamin (v.21,23), Jacob's favouritism for Benjamin (v.20), the continuous sorrow of Jacob for Joseph (v.20,28), Jacob's concern for Benjamin's life (v.22,29-31) and Judah's responsibility before his father for Benjamin's life (v.32).

Secondly, the speech shows changes produced in Judah and his brothers. Judah's change is shown when he offered himself in Benjamin's place order to preserve Jacob's life (v.33,34).

This brief exposition of the main family conflicts and the deep change shown in Judah and his brothers produced the *peripety* or reversal in the story.

Recognition

The Greek word for recognition or discovery is *αναγνωριστις* (*anagnorisis*). This word indicates a change from ignorance to knowledge. The knowledge is best when linked with reversal¹⁸³ because the recognition must be the response of the reversal.

¹⁸¹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.15.

¹⁸² Liddell, and Scott, Comp. *A Greek – English Lexicon*, p.1382.

¹⁸³ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.15.

The result of Judah's speech was Joseph's self-discovery before his brothers; Joseph could not repress anymore his feelings and emotions. Judah's speech achieved a breakthrough in Joseph's heart, and Joseph's emotions and feelings exploded. Earlier, Joseph had been able to hide his emotions in front of his brothers (Gen 42:24, 43:30) but now it is not possible because Judah's words had touched Joseph deeply. Judah's eloquent speech had activated Joseph's emotions and feelings, and Joseph expressed these uncontrollably. Gen 45:1 says: "*Joseph could not control¹⁸⁴ himself*" and v.2: "*he wept aloud*". In these circumstances Joseph made himself known to his brothers. Gen 45:3 says: "*I am Joseph!*", v.4: "*I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.*" Joseph made himself known by means of his name and the evil action of his brothers, this evil action identifies Joseph unequivocally. He repeats again this action in v.5.

Joseph's speech shows another *anagnorisis*, it is God's work (Gen 45:5,7,8,9). Joseph states that God was behind all these past things. As in the case of the evil action of Joseph's brothers, Joseph reveals that all was God's action according to his plan, v. 5 says: "*God sent me.*" Four times Joseph refers to God's action in chapter 45 (v.5,7,8,9).

According to Sternberg passing from ignorance to knowledge¹⁸⁵ is a process all along in the story, which is achieved by different ways.¹⁸⁶ Joseph wants to know about his father, his young brother and if his brothers have changed, and for that reason he tests his brothers. Joseph's brothers attain knowledge in a forced way through Joseph testing them. Jacob obtains knowledge under the threat of the loss of his youngest son. All these elements converge in the speeches of Judah and Joseph. These speeches are the encounter point and then, the transforming action occurs. If this convergence does not happen, the transforming action would not occur. These two elements, reversal and discovery are essential in every narrative to attain its goal.

¹⁸⁴ In the Hebrew text and the LXX is a reflexive verb (Hitphael and middle respectively). This verb indicates an inner process in Joseph, a personal reaction to Judah's speech, which had achieved his goal.

¹⁸⁵ Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p176. He says that the passage from ignorance to knowledge "is another Hebraic innovation for which the Greek go all the credit."

¹⁸⁶ Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, p176.

Alter comments on knowledge in Gen 45 by the use of the Hebrew verbs to know. He says: “This theme of knowledge is formally enunciated through the paired key words, *haker*, ‘recognize’ and *yadoa*, ‘know,’ that run through the story.”¹⁸⁷ The verb *haker* is used in Gen 37:32,33; 38:25,26 and 42:7,8, and *yadoa* in Gen. 45:1. Justly this knowledge leads to the final resolution of the whole story.¹⁸⁸

These two essential elements of the plot, *peripeteia* and *anagnorisis* occur at the highest point of tension in the narrative. This is the moment of climax in the story, from this point the story changes completely. From this moment the reader has a different and new perspective on his world. The reader sees and understands the things and past events in a new way, from another perspective. *Peripeteia* and *anagnorisis* can be followed by *metanoia* (μετάνοια), that is, repentance, change of mind, heart, purpose, opinion and thinking.¹⁸⁹

So, in Judah and Joseph’s speeches, the Joseph story achieves its highest peak of tension in the narrative. In these speeches are seen the reversal and recognition of the story and these are followed by repentance and reconciliation in Jacob’s family. From this point the story changes direction, and the relationship in Jacob’s family changes from bad to good. Joseph’s brothers see things in a new way. Now they understand God and his plan in a different manner.

5. Typology

5.1. Definition of typology

The Greek word for type is *τυπος* (*typos*). This word in its natural sense means: mark, impress, pattern, model, example, image, etc.¹⁹⁰ Brown states “The schema of thought

¹⁸⁷ Alter, *The Art of the Biblical Narrative*, p.198.

¹⁸⁸ Alter, *The Art of the Biblical Narrative*, p.198.

¹⁸⁹ Liddell and Scott, Comp. *A Greek – English Lexicon*, p.1151.

¹⁹⁰ Patrick Fairbairn, *Typology of Scripture*. Two volumes in one. Originally published: New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1900. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1989, p.42. Brown, Colin. Ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Translated, with additions and revisions from the German: Theologisches Begriffslexikon Zum Neuen Testament, Edited by Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther and Hans Bietenhard. Volume 1: A-F. Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1986, p.71. A. Berkeley Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible*. Fourth printing, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972, p.237.

which see historical persons, event and institutions as ‘types’ or patterns of subsequent greater persons, event and institutions.”¹⁹¹ Mickelsen says that it is the correspondence in one or more aspects between a person, event, or thing of the Old Testament with a person, event, or thing in the New Testament which determines a type, and this occurs within the historical framework of revelation.¹⁹² Silva defines typology as the view that certain historical characters or events in some way prefigure others corresponding to them in a later period.”¹⁹³ Fairbairn states that the theological sense links the types between the Old and New Testament.¹⁹⁴ Brown says: “Typology plays an important part in the Christian interpretation of OT, in identifying statements which originally belonged to a particular historical situation and applying them to Jesus and the church.”¹⁹⁵

According to these authors there are some elements that identify a type, these are: patterns, historical and theological elements, and the correspondence of figures between the Old and New Testament.

About the typology of Christ, the New Testament demonstrates this issue. Here are two examples: In Luke 24:27 Jesus explains to his disciples the things that the Old Testament says about him. Another example, in Hebrews 8 gives a clear example, when the biblical writer is talking about the high priest as an allusion to Christ, he says that the previous high priests were “*a copy and shadow*” (v5) of the true high priest, Jesus Christ. And a purpose of Christian theology is to show that the Old Testament foreshadows images and aspects of a personal redeemer, whose coming would be in the future, and when Jesus came these images were fulfilled.

¹⁹¹ Brown, Ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 1, p.71. Also can see Vol. 3, p.903-906.

¹⁹² Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible*, p.237,238.

¹⁹³ MoisesSilva, Ed. *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Apollos, 1997, p.44,45.

¹⁹⁴ Fairbairn, *Typology of Scripture*, p.46.

¹⁹⁵ Brown, Ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 1, p.71. Also can see Vol. 3, p.903-906.

5.2. Judah as type of Jesus Christ

According to Waltke, Judah is a type of Christ because he

“is the first person in Scripture who willingly offers his own life for another. His self-sacrificing love for his brothers for the sake of his father prefigures the vicarious atonement of Christ, who by his voluntary sufferings heals the breach between God and human beings.”¹⁹⁶

But Westermann¹⁹⁷ does not agree because Judah’s sacrifice is only reconciling Jacob’s family and Greidanus¹⁹⁸ affirms that Judah’s sacrifice is something incidental. In other words, Judah’s offer is not a strong type of Christ because his offer was never realized. But the type is not necessarily perfect, but an example, image and shadow because the perfect is Christ. In this sense, Judah could be an example or shadow of Christ’s perfect sacrifice.

Also Judah can be a type of Christ in the sense of surety because Judah was surety before his father for Benjamin (Gen 43:9; 44:32). Judah becomes responsible for Benjamin’s life. Judah interceded for Benjamin in front of Joseph. In the New Testament there are texts that refer to Christ as Intercessor, for example, Hebrews 8:6 when Jesus is presented as Mediator in his condition as High Priest, or in 1 John 2:1 as the believers’ advocate. Jesus’ intercessory prayer in John 17 also can be seen in this way.

5.3. Joseph as Type of Christ

According to Greidanus: “Joseph makes for a much stronger type of Jesus.”¹⁹⁹ And he considers Joseph as a type of Christ in three aspects:

- “As God sent Joseph to Egypt to save his family, so God sent Jesus to earth to save his people.”
- “As the brothers bowed before Joseph, so ‘at the name of Jesus every knee should bow’ (Phil. 2:10).”

¹⁹⁶ Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p.567.

¹⁹⁷ Westermann, *Genesis 37-50 A Commentary*, p.137,138.

¹⁹⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, p.4.

¹⁹⁹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, p.419.

- As Joseph invited his family to settle in Egypt, so Jesus invites his people to settle in his father's kingdom (John 14:2-3)."

Waltke focuses on other aspects:

"the father's favourite son is sent to his brothers. They sell their guiltless brother for twenty pieces of silver, and he becomes their lord. The Joseph story also provides a remarkable parallel of Christ's death – God decides beforehand that through wicked hands he will nail Christ to the cross and so save the world (see Acts 2:23; 4:28)."²⁰⁰

Now, when Joseph made himself known to his brothers he uses the expression: "I am" followed by his name. Twice this expression is repeated (Gen 45:3,4). The Hebrew text is אָנֹכִי (*ani*) This pronoun has an emphatic use to call attention to oneself. Jenni and Westermann comment: "allows the speaker to inject himself / herself emphatically into the discussion and to represent his/her concerns forcefully."²⁰¹ Also it can be used as a formula of introduction (Gen.41:44).²⁰² So Joseph uses this formula to introduce himself before his baffled brothers. When Joseph identifies himself, he does not want to leave doubt of his identity before them. The LXX translate אָנֹכִי as: εγω εμι (*ego eimi*). This is an emphatic pronoun to indicate certainty, without doubt. Brown says that this formula of self-presentation is used in connection with Yahweh, when he makes himself known as the patriarchs' God, as in Gen 15:7; 17:1; 28:13; 35:11, also in Ex 20:2 and 3:14.²⁰³ "This self-presentation was necessary in the polytheistic world of the ancient orient; it sought to secure the trust of the recipient of the revelation in this one God alone."²⁰⁴ In the New Testament "I am" is used in the Gospels when Jesus introduces himself.²⁰⁵ So Jesus introduces himself as: the light (John.8:12), the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6), the bread life (John 6:48), the gate (John 10:7) the good shepherd (John 10:11) and as God's son (Luke 22:70) In Matt 22:32 εγω εμι introduces the patriarchs' God. When Jesus appears before his disciples after his resurrection he

²⁰⁰ Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p.567.

²⁰¹ Ernest Jenni, and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Volume 1, translated by Mark E. Biddle. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997, p.164.

²⁰² Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p.22.

²⁰³ Brown, ed., *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 2, p.278.

²⁰⁴ Brown, ed., *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 2, p.278.

²⁰⁵ According scholars this formula differs in meaning among John, Synoptic, Paul and Revelation (Brown, p.279).

says: “*I am*” (Luke 24:39). Similarly, it is seen with Paul in Acts 9:5. Finally, it appears in Revelation: “*I am: “the Alpha and the Omega”* (1:8), “*the first and the last*” (1:17), “*he who searches mind and heart*” (2:23).

After this very short analysis of the phrase “*I am*” the relation between Joseph and Jesus can be seen. This formula “*I am*” avoids confusions, so Joseph was the only hope of salvation for Jacob’s family from death because of the famine. So, also Jesus is the unique hope to life.

Fairbairn²⁰⁶ compares Joseph and Christ by means of preeminence. Joseph was depreciated and sold by his brothers. But God was with him to bless (Gen 39:2,3). Then Joseph presents himself before his brothers as governor of Egypt with preeminence over many people (Gen 41:40,41) and his brothers. The same occurred with Jesus, he was hated and sold, he suffered and died, but he arose from dead, he was presented alive before his disciples, was glorified and attained preeminence over the entire world. (Phil 2:6-11). Joseph saved his people from the famine; Jesus saves from sin and eternal death.

Now, some literary parallels show typology between Joseph and Jesus: Joseph and Jesus were loved by their fathers (Gen 37:3 with John 3:35, 5:20,15:9; Matt 3:17, 17:5). Jacob gives dignity to Joseph by means of a special robe; Jesus was dressed with a scarlet or splendid robe by his mockers (Gen 37:3 with Matt 27:28, Luke 23:11). Joseph’s brothers envied him and this led them to wish his death, Also Jesus was delivered to death because envy (Gen 37:11 with Act 7:9; Matt 27:18). Joseph was sold by his own brothers and Jesus was sold by his own disciple, Judas Iscariot (Gen 37:28 with Act. 7:9; Matt 26:15). Jacob had chosen Joseph as his heir over his other sons and this was another reason that they had to procure his death. Jesus expresses this idea by means of a parable that he is God’s inheritor son (Gen 37:20 with Mark 12:7, Heb 1:12). God was with Joseph all the time, also God was with Jesus during his life and ministry (Gen 37:2,3,5,21,23; with Act. 7:9; Matt 1:23; Luke 4:18). God’s Spirit was with Joseph and Jesus (Gen 41:37 with Matt 4:1; 12:18; Luke 4:1,18; etc.). After his humiliation and suffering Joseph was exalted when Pharaoh makes him governor of all Egypt. Jesus suffered, he was abused and died but in his resurrection was exalted, he was made Lord (Gen 37:7; 41:40,41;45:8 with Eph 1:20-22; Phil 2:9). Joseph’s

²⁰⁶ Fairbairn, *Typology of Scripture*, p.324-326.

brothers bowed before him, as indicated in Joseph's dreams. The New Testament says that all the world will bow before Jesus (Gen 37:7,9; 42:6,9; 43:26,28; 44:14 with Phil 2:10). Joseph and Jesus appeared before his own people when they thought that he had died (Gen 45:3,4 with Luke 24:29: Act 9:5). Both Joseph and Jesus were God's envoys for the salvation of his people (Gen 45:5,7,8 with Matt 21:37, Mark 9:37, Luke 4:18, John 4:34, Gal 4:4). Finally, the age of Joseph and Jesus are coincident, the two arose to public life to serve at thirty years of age (Gen 41:46 with Luke 3:23).

These parallels show a lot of similarity between Joseph and Christ, and they meet the requirements of a type, because the point of comparison and correspondence stand out neatly.

Also both, Joseph and Jesus are historical characters and have theological correspondence, in other words they are type and antitype. Joseph is the shadow or image and Jesus is the true one. Joseph is the copy and Jesus is the original.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter five fundamental issues in the study of the biblical narrative were tried. The first four show how the narrative works to achieve his purpose and effect on the reader. The biblical narrative always has a theological perspective and for this reasons the main character is God, he is the hero of all stories in the Bible. The unity of the story allows following its sequence, the secrecy creates the suspense, the mimesis shows how the narrator describes a reality according to his aim, reversal and recognition showed the transforming action in the story. The last subject, typology, is fundamental from Christian perspective because all stories have the purpose to relate God with man and in Christ this encounter and experience has its concrete expression.

These points in this chapter help to understand how the reader must analyse the biblical narrative for an adequate understanding and in this way the reader could reproduce the biblical story for other listeners by means of a sermon , which is the aim this thesis.

CHAPTER 4

THE SERMON

1. Construction of the sermon

The following literary aspects of the pericopes have been examined: unity; secrecy; mimesis; reversal; and typology. These will form the main content of the narrative sermon.

To develop the sermon structure I will use ideas from these authors: Mathewson, Marguerat & Bourquin, Yamasaki and Greidanus. Mathewson because he suggests an inductive development: “Induction starts with the specific pieces and the works its way through them to the conclusion or the whole. The answer is unknown at the beginning. The idea does not emerge until the end.”²⁰⁷ I believe that this method helps to create suspense in the narrative sermon, with the answer revealed at the end of the sermon. Marguerat & Bourquin use the quinary scheme²⁰⁸ to sketch the narrative plot. I use this scheme because this allows the reader to see the narrative tension and climax of the story. Also this scheme is more symmetric and harmonic to describe the story. So this scheme helps to produce an exegetical outline which creates the impact of the narrative. Yamasaki’s²⁰⁹ ideas about point of view on the psychological plane of the characters are used. His approach allows the reader to see in the inner life of characters of the story, and this is important because in this pericope of the Joseph story psychological effects are notorious. I take Greidanus’ ideas because he asserts that all sermons should be a Christian sermon, that is, the preacher must preach to Christ in all his sermons. Greidanus suggests some forms for preaching Christ from the biblical narratives in the Old Testament²¹⁰, such as typology, analogy, etc. Greidanus retells the Bible stories and makes them relevant to today's hearers²¹¹

²⁰⁷ Mathewson. *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.114.

²⁰⁸ Marguerat & Bourquin. *How to Read Bible Story*, p43. This scheme was explained in chapter 3: Literary Analysis of Gen 44:18-34; 45:1-8, point: The Plot.

²⁰⁹ Gary Yamasaki. *Perspective Criticism: Point of View and Evaluative Guidance in Biblical Narrative*, p.35-53.

²¹⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, pp. 3-6.

²¹¹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, pp.40-41.

2. Sermon outline

Title: Good family relationships for God's blessings

Text: Gen 44:1-34; 45:1-8

Exegetical idea: The reconciliation of Jacob's family is made possible by means of the recognition of its problems and the reversal of family relationships and in this way continuing towards the fulfilment of the Lord's promise for Israel.

Theological idea: God leads Jacob's family by means of recognition of its problems to reverse its family relationships from bad to good, in order to fulfil his promise of salvation and blessing for this family.

Typological idea: Christ forgives all offense; so also, the family members must be willing to forgive all offense among them in order to restore their relationships.

Main idea: We need to reverse broken relationships in our family in order to receive the Lord's blessings for the Christian family.

Goal of the sermon: Encourage families of the church to reverse those broken family relationships by means of the recognition their causes, and in this way they will receive the Lord's blessings.

I. **The Lord leads the family to reverse its broken relationships in order to manifest his blessing in the family. 44:18-34**

- A. Sometimes, the Lord leads us to a dramatic family situation to compel us to reverse broken family relationships (44:18-24).
- B. The best that members of a family can do is having the will to depose their self-interests and to seek the reversion of their broken relationships (44:25-34).

II. **We need to reverse broken relationships in our family in order to receive the Lord's blessings. 45:1-8.**

- A. The Lord gives us the opportunity to reverse our broken family relationships (45:1-4).
- B. Forgiveness is essential to reverse the broken family relationships (45:4-5).
- C. The Lord is the one who leads our family towards the reversion of our broken relationships in order to bless and save (45:5-8).

Conclusion

We need to reverse our broken family relationships to a good one, and in this way God will bless our families.

3. Development of the sermon

This sermon will be developed inductively. The main idea will be constructed from specific parts²¹². The main idea of the sermon will be viewed as ending, and not as beginning.²¹³ I will start with the sub-point "A", then "B" and finally the first main point. In the second part, I proceed in the same way, I start with sub-points and I finish with the second main point. But the main second point is the main idea of the sermon; so whole the sermon is directed to this second main point. The second main point is the climax. This way, I attempt to create a narrative tension throughout which matches its narrative tension. Also, this way, I think in terms of moves rather than points²¹⁴. Ergo, it is in terms of calling listeners to dynamic action rather than believing static propositions. I proceed as follows: Each point of the sermon will be highlighted. So the main points in upper-case italics, the sub-points with lower-case italics.

4. Manuscript of the sermon

The breaking of relationships among members of a family indicates a dysfunctional family. In the interview made with eleven Peruvian ministers in Lima and Tarapoto

²¹² Mathewson, *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.114. Also see Mathewson's sermon in pages 161-172.

²¹³ Mathewson, *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.123.

²¹⁴ Mathewson, *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, p.123.

cities about dysfunctional families in their church, all of them assert to have dysfunctional families. This issue is a reality in their churches.

I want to tell you something that eleven ministers interviewed in Lima and Tarapoto say about it. Sixto has his church among poor people and he asserts that in his church “approximately sixty per cent are dysfunctional families.” Luis says “it is our daily bread to deal with dysfunctional families.” Tim comments, “we have a lot of dysfunctional families in any church.” Javier asserts that in his church “exist a lot of dysfunctional families.” Also Caleb comments “a lot of families in our congregations have dysfunctional characteristics”. All these commentaries describe a reality in the churches respect of families dysfunctional.

Also, the ministers assert that the dysfunctional family produces violence and other harmful things within the family. Here are some opinions about that: Sixto asserts that dysfunctional families produce educational problems in children. Raul and Lucas say that the result is violence: the husband hits his wife and children. Francisco affirms that this produces egoism, this means, each family member is only concerned for their own interests, and they are not interested in each other.

According to ministers from Lima, favouritism is a problem which is strongly highlighted in the Joseph story. This problem was one of the main causes of dysfunction. They opined that favouritism caused serious problems in this biblical family. So, the minister Tim refers to the cocky children in some families of the church. This problem can cause dysfunctional problems in the family, because favouritism spoils family relationships.

All these opinions of ministers indicate a disruption in family relationships. This disruption occurs for various causes and in different areas of family life. All ministers express that *all churches have families with dysfunctional problems*. This is an undeniable reality.

You and I can be suffering some disruption of relationship in our family and this situation cuts off the Lord’s blessings from our family. If so, this is the opportunity to fix this situation. It is the opportunity to reverse our broken family relationships for good.

The biblical narrative is the story of a dysfunctional family whose relationships were broken. This is Jacob's family. Long before the segment of Joseph's story this family had had many problems. Relationships were not good. When we consider the Joseph story the situation worsens because Jacob stresses his favouritism towards Joseph, the son of his favourite wife. Jacob's favouritism for Joseph (Gen 37:3) caused a deep psychological effect in his other children, and this effect was manifested by means of envy and hate against Joseph. Envy and hate are descriptive words of the inner life of characters. Ministers interviewed in the focus group in Lima commented on this issue of favouritism as a serious problem in many Peruvian families. They talked about conceited, chosen and favourite children. So, this abhorrence led Joseph's brothers to desire his death (Gen 37:18,20), for this reason they sold Joseph, and then, they told Jacob that Joseph was devoured by some wild beast. So, this family was living a real situation of many problems in its family relationships. In this family there was had favouritism, envy, hatred, and sorrow; it was the reality about its relationships.

Joseph was sold in Egypt; in this place he passed through much and injustice, until Pharaoh made him governor of Egypt. Joseph was to control, and collected and distributed food at a time of famine. This famine also affected Canaan and other places. Many people were coming to Egypt to buy food.

This famine situation obligated Jacob to seek food in Egypt. He sent his children to Egypt. Jacob's children arrived in Egypt together with other people. When they were in the presence of the governor, who was Joseph, they were recognized by him, but they did not recognize their brother. When Joseph saw his brothers, he treated them rudely, and he accused them as spies. Joseph's brothers reacted by saying that they are honest men, that they have an old father, a younger brother and a lost brother, which disappeared.

In this first meeting, many things passed between Joseph and his brothers. Joseph gave food to his brothers, but he told them, if they want more food, they would have to bring their youngest brother. In this way, Benjamin was brought before Joseph despite Jacob's refusal, because Jacob feared some disgrace would happen to his youngest brother as had happened to Joseph.

Apparently Joseph thought that Benjamin was in danger with his brothers, so he made a trick to impede the return of his younger brother. Benjamin was accused of stealing Joseph's cup; they were captured and brought before Joseph who made a verdict: Benjamin will remain as a slave to him (Gen 44:17).

The situation is hopeless, because Judah and his brothers had promised their father to come back with Benjamin. Now his father would be in danger of death because of his great sorrow. All these things would increase the disgrace in Jacob's family.

Now, Judah and his brothers fell on the ground before Joseph (Gen 44:14). Judah starts his defence in order to save Benjamin and to avoid more pain in Jacob's heart which would be caused by the loss of his youngest son. Judah intercedes for his youngest brother and particularly for his old father, whose health is precarious.

Judah's petition before Joseph is not for justice but compassion, because the evidence was against Benjamin (Gen 44:16). For this reason, Judah appeals to Joseph's feelings. Judah refers to the previous conversation between them, when Joseph asked for Judah's family (Gen 43:7, 27). Judah replied that they have an old and sick father, a youngest brother, whom his father loves a lot and a lost brother. Also he told him that due to this loss, Jacob had fallen sick, and he also feared to lose Benjamin. If Benjamin does not come back to his father, he will surely die.

In the past Judah was not interested in his family, but now, he is concerned for his father, his youngest brother and other brothers. He is interested in his whole family. Judah is a different man, a transformed one. In Gen 37 he is an evil man, the same in Gen 38, but by the end of Gen 38 he is confronted with his sins. It seems that from this episode on his life, he changes for the better. Before, he was a villain, but now, he is a hero who fights for his family in order to achieve its unity and welfare. Judah passed from a reality to another in his life, from a bad person to a good one (mimesis and reversal).

Many things had passed in this family, but the Lord led them until this dramatic family situation to compel them to restore family relationship in order to bless them. God was addressing them towards a reversal in their family relationships from a conflict family situation. This dramatic situation was the opportunity to reverse the broken family

relationships. Now they fight so that their family survives. They leave their personal interests behind in favour of their family. They are humiliated and ashamed by their evil behaviour (Gen 42:21-23).

Today some Christian families can be passing through family problems without being concerned for a solution. The problems can worsen and they do nothing. For this reason: *Sometimes, the Lord leads us to a dramatic family situation to compel us to reverse broken family relationships.*

Judah continues appealing to Joseph's clemency. Judah reveals to Joseph the dialogue between himself and his father. This stirred Joseph's desire to see Benjamin. Judah explains to Joseph his father's health condition. Jacob maintained great anguish for his lost son, thinking that Joseph had been killed by some wild beast and that he would never see him again. This situation of Jacob's health was secrecy to Joseph until this moment.

Now, if Benjamin does not return with his father, Jacob's anguish would increase to the point that he could die. Judah refers to Jacob's words: *"If you take this one also from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring down my gray hairs in evil to Sheol"* (44:29). It seems that Judah's purpose is to put on Joseph the responsibility of Jacob's probable death.

Sheol is an interesting word in this context because this word indicates that people go to this place against their will. So Jacob would go to the place of the dead against his will and in this case because of Joseph's blame.

Judah leaves his personal interests behind in favour of his family. He is humiliated before his brother Joseph. Now Judah intends to persuade Joseph in order to make him renounce his verdict regarding Benjamin. Judah does not know, but he is asking his brother to leave his personal interests behind in favour of the unity and welfare of their family.

The Lord had a purpose for Jacob's family. The Lord would make a nation of this family and Judah is working for this purpose when he is in favour of its unity and

welfare. So also we must work for the unity and welfare of our family in order to form a Christian generation which will give testimony to Christ's power in the family and this generation will better influence the world.

Joseph is observing that Judah and his brothers do not have envy and hate for Benjamin despite him now being Jacob's favourite son. They show detachment. Now they are concerned about their father's welfare. Benjamin is not in danger among his brothers such as Joseph was. Benjamin is cared for by his brothers. It seems that this attitude of Joseph's brothers is impacting Joseph's heart.

Judah further shows his disposition to leave his own interests for his father's welfare and his family when he offered himself in place of Benjamin. Judah is ready to suffer punishment for Benjamin. He gives his life for his brother and father. Judah's attitude affected Joseph's heart. It is similar of Jesus Christ's sacrifice. He offered his life for us and this way we were delivered from the slavery of the sin.

Judah says to Joseph: "*Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers*" (44:33). It seems that Joseph did not expect such self-giving from Judah. Joseph is surprised. His defences fall in front of this attitude of sacrifice for the family.

Judah finishes his speech with an anguished expression: "*I fear to see the evil that would find my father*" (44:34). In this way, Judah and his brothers showed their disposition to leave their own interests for the welfare of their family. So today, when the Christian family is crossing problems, ***the best that members of a family can do is having the will to depose their self-interests and to seek the reversion of their broken relationships*** (44:25-34).

Judah's speech is coherent with his change that he had in his life. His speech shows that this man is the same, but changed. This speech refers to a previous change.

So the Lord is leading Jacob's family to a dramatic situation in order to restore their family relationships. In this situation Joseph and his brothers are willing to abandon their personal interests for the benefit of the family.

According to the interviewed pastors in Lima and Tarapoto, in their churches many families are traversing different problems. These are against the family unity. Pastors see families traversing dramatic situations, some families request aid when they are in this kind of situation. Namely, families ask for help only when they are in an untenable situation. Some members are willing to abandon their personal interests, others no, and this refusal hinders aid. In some, the attitude is to abandon personal interests is a process. But certainly, only when families are in a dramatic or untenable situation, they request aid. This seems to be a pattern in these issues.

Now, Christian families need God's blessings, and the Lord is guiding them towards his unity for blessings, and one way is by means of dramatic situations. Amid these complicated situations God's guidance is working in favour of your family, because ***THE LORD LEADS THE FAMILY TO REVERSE ITS BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS IN ORDER TO MANIFEST HIS BLESSING IN THE FAMILY.***

The Lord wants to manifest his blessings to you and your family by this reason; he is guiding you and your family towards this difficult situation. These difficulties are in secret to us, but at the time we will understand God purpose for our family. So that you may resettle your family relationship and in this way God can manifest his blessings and purpose in your family.

Are you passing through tense situations with your family? This is the opportunity because by means of these difficult situations the Lord is leading you and your family towards the restoration of your family relationships. By means of this dramatic situation the Lord leads towards family reconciliation and in this way you will receive God's blessings for you and your family. But you must start disposing of your personal interests to benefit your family because it is the first step towards family restoration and then God's blessings will come. In this moment you cannot understand all of this, but you must know: ***THE LORD LEADS THE FAMILY TO REVERSE ITS BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS IN ORDER TO MANIFEST HIS BLESSING IN THE FAMILY.***

After Joseph listened to Judah and his brothers, he sees the attitude of his brothers and he sees their willingness to abandon their personal interests. Joseph was seeing a new

reality in his brothers' attitudes. They had changed for better, especially Judah's, which had led to Joseph's being sold. Previously Joseph had heard that his brothers recognized their sin against him: "*In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us.*" (42:21). Also before Judah's speech, Joseph heard them say: "*God has found out the guilt of your servants*" (44:16). All these things moved Joseph's heart. Now Joseph has his opportunity to leave his personal interests in favor of the welfare of his family.

The family is a creation of the Lord, as according to the Biblical account he created the first family. The family is part of the Lord's plans for humanity. The Lord is preoccupied for the welfare of families, and for this cause, He wants to bless families, but this blessing does not come if families have broken relationships. For this reason the Lord provides opportunity for families with the purpose of manifesting his blessings to them. So the Lord gives us opportunity to restore our family relationships.

After Joseph had listened to Judah's speech, the biblical text says: "*Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him*" (45:1). In this way, the narrator expresses the effect caused by Judah's speech. In this verse the narrator shows Joseph's inner state and his emotions are very strong. Undoubtedly, Judah's words had impacted deeply on Joseph. Then seeing that he cannot control his emotions, he ordered all his servants before him to go out, with the purpose of making himself known to his brothers. Joseph "*wept aloud*". The scene is very different when Joseph wept secretly (42:24, 43:30). His emotions had come to the maximum; Joseph could not control them anymore. Things had arrived at a point without return for both Joseph and his brothers. This dramatic moment is the key to reconciliation or revenge, to forgive or condemn. This is a moment of decision and an opportunity for Jacob's family. This is the moment to reverse from a bad reality to a good reality.

Now Joseph has to do his part, "the ball is in his court". Joseph has to decide what to do. All these events lead towards this moment, this is his only chance. This is the opportunity to solve the serious family problem. So Joseph decides to make himself known to his brothers. Reverse and knowledge are face to face to create a new reality in this family life. Joseph exclaims "*I am Joseph!*" (45:3) and immediately he asks for his father. Joseph's brothers are shocked; they could not believe what they are hearing and

seeing. They are confused, they cannot respond to Joseph. The biblical text asserts: *“they were dismayed at his presence”* (45:3).

Joseph’s brothers do not know what to think because they are confused. Then Joseph again says: *“I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt”* (45:4). He identifies himself with his name, his sibling relationship and his brothers’ evil action against him, in order to avoid all misunderstanding with his brothers. This secret about Joseph’s being sold is known only by Joseph and his brothers, with the exception of Benjamin. With this self-identification there is cleared all doubt. Secrecy of Joseph’s identity is revealed by himself. Both Joseph and his brothers take advantage of this opportunity to restore their family relationship. So ***the Lord gives us the opportunity to reverse our broken family relationships.***

Joseph’s speech continues, he is willing to abandon his personal interests in order to benefit his family. He is willing to forgive his brothers, and not to avenge himself against them for their evil action against him. Joseph tells them: *“do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here”* (45:5). In this way, Joseph is expressing his forgiveness to his brothers. But Joseph’s forgiveness has a chief motive, which is God’s plan for Jacob’s family. The main reason for the forgiveness is not family feelings but God’s plan with the family. Joseph understands this issue and it seems that his emotions to forgive arise when he understands God’s plan for the family. Joseph has a chief reason to forgive his brothers, the reason is God. Because of that, Joseph repeats three times to his brothers *“God sent me before you”* (45:5,7,8). God’s plan was to preserve the life of Jacob’s family according to God’s promise. The forgiveness is in relation to God’s promise for the family.

The preservation of the family will not be possible if family members are not willing to give and take forgiveness. Joseph gives forgiveness, but it seems that his brothers are unable to accept it or they doubt Joseph’s forgiveness to them (Gen 50:15-21). Joseph’s forgiveness allows the restoration of the family relationships. Forgiveness was the key to restore relationships in Jacob’s family. Also, today for us, *the forgiveness is essential to reverse the broken family relationship.* This case is an example of this principle of restoration.

The Lord was leading Jacob's family by different ways towards the restoration of their relationships. The Lord used the famine to reunite this family. The famine obligated Jacob and his children to seek food in Egypt. They did not know this was a point of encounter. The Lord had prepared all things, and this way, the Lord gave them an opportunity to restore their broken relationships.

Today the Lord continues working with our families in the church; families with the necessity of restoring their relationships. The Lord will use different circumstances to achieve families coming back to good relationships. The Lord does not abandon families in their disgrace, but he procures aid for the solution of family problems. The Lord utilized a famine to collect Jacob's family; so also, the Lord is leading you and your family by means of any circumstances in order to give an opportunity to restore your family relationships.

The restoration of Joseph's family was for blessing and this blessing was to save from death by hunger, but there is something more important than the hunger, the family unity, because this unity would depend on the fulfilment of God's promise for Jacob's family. So also the Lord will give the opportunity for restoration by means of any circumstance. But the final purpose of the Lord is to bless your family and to preserve it according to His divine plan for Christian families.

You have to observe circumstances around your family problems and to take these as the Lord's opportunity to restore your family relationships. The restoration will bring blessings and salvation for your family, because *the Lord is the one who leads our family towards the reversion of our broken relationships in order to bless and save*

So, the Lord gives us the chance to change from bad to good family relationships. The Lord makes this change by means of diverse circumstances that happen in the life of the family. Circumstances have the purpose to conduce us towards the restoration of family relationships. But forgiveness is an essential element to set up or restart good family relationships. Without forgiveness it is not possible to restore relationships. Forgiveness commands us to abandon personal interests in favour of family interests such as unity and preservation. The Lord is the one who guides us towards the opportunity and forgiveness. Thus, **WE NEED TO REVERSE BROKEN**

RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR FAMILY IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S BLESSINGS.

Joseph was willing to forgive all the offenses of his brothers. The evil action of his brothers caused a lot of suffering to Joseph, but all these things did not impede his forgiving them. Joseph did not maintain hatred towards them. He is concerned for his family welfare. This attitude of Joseph makes him a perfect type of Jesus Christ. So also Jesus Christ was willing to forgive all offense against him. Christ pronounced from the cross: *"Father forgives them!"* He did not maintain hatred against his offenders. Jesus Christ came to reconcile humanity with God, and humanity with each other. The family is a part of human relationships, but these are broken many times. Jesus seeks to restore this relation among family members. Jesus is concerned about family welfare. He wants to bless Christian families, but the blessing is not possible if the family keeps broken relationships. For this reason ***WE NEED TO REVERSE BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR FAMILY IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S BLESSINGS.***

From this moment of reconciliation the Joseph story changes to a different direction. Jacob's family starts a new phase. Before, Jacob's family had strong conflicts within it, the apparent destiny of the family was ruin, and they ran the risk of disappearing as a family. Jacob is a bitter, sick and sad old man because of his children's behaviour. Jacob's children are liars, insensitive and cruel with their father and their youngest brothers. But, when they restored their family relationship things changed for good. All the family moved to Egypt to live together. Family restoration gave way to unity them. The Lord's blessings began to manifest themselves from this moment on. The promise of the Lord's blessings started to flow for Jacob's family when they restored their family relationship; so also, ***WE NEED TO REVERSE BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR FAMILY IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S BLESSINGS.***

Conclusion

The ministers interviewed in these two cities manifested that they have dysfunctional families in their churches, to be specific, no church escapes from this reality. The Joseph story offers us an example of restoration of family relationships.

I encourage you to restore your family relationships in those areas where these are broken. These relationships could be between parents and children, between spouses, or among brothers. Each one of us knows where we have to start a work on family restoration. We seek God's blessings for our family. There are blessings of God for our family, but ***WE NEED TO REVERSE BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR FAMILY IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S BLESSINGS.***

CHAPTER 5

THE FAMILY IN THE PERUVIAN CHURCH CONTEXT

1. Purpose and method

This chapter has the purpose to show that the sermon of chapter four is appropriate for the Peruvian church context. This chapter makes a short analysis of families and the dysfunctional problems they confront. This analysis was made in the context of evangelical churches in Peru. This short research was made by means of two focus groups in two different cities and areas: Tarapoto is in the jungle region of Peru; Lima is the capital city of Peru on the coast region. Interviewees were ministers of different evangelical churches in these two cities.

I decided to research using focus groups because this method allows interaction among people. And also this method allows together to examine different point of views of the same theme and in this way the discussion is enriched with different opinions and perspectives. Also in a focus group one can join experienced people²¹⁵ on a given topic; in this case people were brought together with ecclesiastical experiences in evangelical churches.

2. Information of participants

The interview with the focus group in Tarapoto city was on February 2013 with five ministers. All interviewees were male. Their average time in the ministry is 10 years; their average in age is 43 years; their education is higher education and all made theological education, four have bachelor degrees and one master's degree. They are ministers of different denominations.

The interview with the focus group in Lima²¹⁶ city was on May 2013 with six ministers. All interviewees were male. Their average time in the ministry is 26 years;

²¹⁵ A. N. Oppenheim, *Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude Measurement*, New edition 1992. Reprinted 1998. London and Washington: Pinter, 1998, p.79.

²¹⁶ Ministers interviewee at Lima city were: Lucas Grandez, 59 years old; Raul Hinojosa, 44 years old; Luis Cornejo, 51 years old; Francisco Vergara, 53 years old; Timothy McIntosh, 61 years old and Sixto Navarro, 54 years old.

their average in age is 53 years. Their education: four made university and two higher. All have theological education; two have doctoral degrees, three master's degrees and one bachelor degree. They are part of different denominations.²¹⁷

The group of Tarapoto²¹⁸ city has less ministerial experience, age and theological education degree than the group of Lima. Between both groups of ministers there is an average of 49 years; the youngest minister is 37 and the oldest 61 years old. The ministerial experience is an average of 18 years; it goes from 7 to 39 years.

All ministers opined from their ministerial perspective in the context of their churches; each one illustrated his opinion by means of some real cases. All cases were from their ministerial experiences with families. They related their observations about characteristics, behaviour, and the life of dysfunctional families in their churches. They did not refer alien cases to them, but cases from their own professional experience.

3. Theme of Focus groups

The interview talks about dysfunctional families in the Peruvian church; about their definition, features, causes and effects, the ministerial support, how the minister could help families with the Joseph story, how a dysfunctional family can benefit the church, and finally, if this discussion changed some concepts about the treatment of a dysfunctional family.

4. Questions made in the interview

First question: How do you define a dysfunctional family?

Ministers from Lima. Lucas: “a family in which the members change their functions or do not fulfil them responsibly, or the family does not live with harmony and unity...also when a family is influenced by the family concepts of their culture”. **Sixto:** “Fathers are not fulfilling with their responsibility”. **Raul:** “when the couple or the

²¹⁷ See appendix 3, p.105.

²¹⁸ Ministers interviewee at Tarapoto city were: Javier Vasquez, 39 years old; Erick Vilca, 37 years old; Jorge Vasquez, 50 years old; Alfonso Cuesta, 44 years old and Caleb Cuesta, 47 years old.

family is not doing what is normal in a couple or family”. **Francisco**: “a family in which they do not fulfil roles and they cannot adapt to new situations”. **Tim**: “when the family environment does not offer security, welfare and mutual support, but a family can overcome limitations of their environment” **Luis**: “husbands or parents do not fulfil their roles inside the family, also people think that a dysfunctional family is a family where one of the parents is absent but it is a stereotype, because there are families complete and they are dysfunctional.”

Ministers from Tarapoto. Jorge: “a dysfunctional family is when they do not fulfil social requirements such as in a conflictive family”. **Erick**: “it is a family that lacks one of the parents”. **Alfonso**: “when there is not unity in the marriage and this is reflected in the children, house and church by means of conflicts”. **Caleb**: “when a family does not have the necessary elements to be a functional family”. **Javier**: “when parents and children are not fulfilling their roles in the family”

I think these definitions are true, but each one considers only some aspects of a dysfunctional family. Each minister focuses his definition from his perspective and pastoral experience. These definitions are inside of the Peruvian church context. They show that the church is affected by this problem like people out of the church and they are fighting with this problem of dysfunctional families in the church.

Second question: Do you have dysfunctional families in your church? What are their characteristics?

Ministers from Lima. Sixto: “in my church, approximately 60 per cent are dysfunctional families and the characteristic in common is that children cannot study because they do not receive support...” **Raul**: “I have two cases... and the characteristics are that children do not have paternal affection, ... young daughters fell in sexual relations with boyfriends, and also, the children have insecurity because parents are not with them.” **Francisco**: “yes, in the church there are dysfunctional families... despite that the family is complete and lives together, their members are not fulfilling their roles and everybody does what he wants.” **Luis**, he asks the question: what church does not have dysfunctional families? And next he mentions some characteristics: the father does not provide for the house, the mother by assuming this role neglects her house and the discipline of the children, then these problems are

manifest in the children's behaviour and the tension in the family. **Tim** says churches have a lot of dysfunctional families and these are characterized by the disunity, bad decisions and every one of the members have different priorities. **Lucas** mentions some characteristics: “lack of emotional balance”, “irresponsibility to fulfil the duties”.

Ministers from Tarapoto. **Erick** cites some characteristics: by means of separation, children only live with the father or the mother, when these take a new partner the children are cared for by people who are not their parents. **Jorge**, he mentions family violence; the older children take care of the younger because the parents are working and machismo. **Javier**, also he claims having a lot of dysfunctional families inside his church, some characteristics are: fathers think they fulfil their role when they bring money to the house and they neglect the necessity of affection for children and wife. **Caleb** claims that in his church there are families that show dysfunctional characteristics such as the grandmothers raising the children whose parents do not assume their responsibility. **Alfonso** says that in his church there are several dysfunctional families and something notorious in these families is the subject in their lives' priorities, they put business before family or church, and this attitude causes family conflicts.

So, for the question on characteristics of a dysfunctional family, answers were several. Ministers started recognizing that they all have dysfunctional families in their churches. This problem is present in all churches. Ministers are dealing continually with this issue. They are constantly ministering to families with broken family relationships by different reasons. So this issue is common in all churches.

Third question: What factors make a dysfunctional family? And what effects produce these factors on families?

Ministers from Lima. For **Raul** the main factor is the lack of training in family values, and this is a problem in Peruvian families, in all social levels. **Sixto** opines, one cause would be when one of the spouses has a higher academic level than the other, especially when it is the wife. **Francisco** says the absence of one of the parents is a cause. Also he says a factor is the lack of a family life project, and each family member has his own project and they do not put interest in other family members. **Tim** claims the lack of intentionality to develop a family and a marriage; they do not take time

needed. Enemies of functionality are television and internet without control. Also, the influence of alcoholism, drug and other addiction in the family. **Luis** opines that a factor is the lack of spiritual maturity of spouses and children. **Lucas** mentions various factors, such as the parents' model, giving more importance to work rather than the family, no disciplining of the children with firmness and love, spiritual affinity, and sexual maturity. **Francisco** opines that the result of an inquiry was that 70 per cent of successful men spend very little time with their families. Also **Tim** opines that a bad relation between children and parents will cause conflicts in their own families and other relations in their lives.

Ministers from Tarapoto. **Erick** says that government contributes to the dysfunction of the family because it allows, by means of a law, sex between minors. **Jorge** mentions some factors, such as gender equality, and for this reason roles are exchanged and this cause conflict in the family. **Caleb** gives us some factors such as: "people are taking God out of their life, their house, and they do not want God", also the example of the parents' marriage, cultural models about marriage which come through television and media, finally, a neglect of biblical family values. **Alfonso** speaks of the need for premarital counsel as an important factor to avoid dysfunctional families. In his church there are families who have not received this counsel. This problem befalls them because the church neglects this issue. Also **Javier** opines like the ministers before him: the bad example of the parents, children repeat the same sins of their parents. Other factors are: the media, which are very liberal and young people want to do what they see and hear on the media.

The answers of the ministers are several and these responses allow us to see the panorama in the church about this issue. Members of churches in Peru show a lot of causes or factors which affect Christian families. I think these factors mentioned by these ministers are only one part, but they allow us to see the reality of Christian families in Peruvian churches.

Fourth question: How are you helping these families?

Ministers from Lima. **Luis** says that they try to see the issue in an integral manner, because the whole family is involved and not only the couple. **Raul** refers to a particular case of a couple; Raul and his wife are focusing the pastoral treatment in

three areas: biblical, psychological and legal treatment. According to Raul this treatment is achieving good results. **Lucas** meets one time per week and he teaches God's word to the couple, he tries to persuade them that God and his word are the basis to live well. He talks about personal relationship with God. And finally he teaches them how to have family harmony. According to Lucas, he obtains good results. **Sixto** comments that they help with some material assistance such as buying medicine when a member of the family is sick. **Francisco** refers to a case where the husband does not want to receive therapy, this man says: we just have to pray. The wife feels frustrated because her husband denies the help. But Francisco helped both to make a personal diary about their feelings, and then Francisco meets with them to compare their diaries. But this man insists: we just have to pray. **Tim** manifests the necessity of teaching God's word in order to combat the family problem. This teaching must be in intentional manner so that people understand and apply God's word to their family. Again **Luis** intervenes referring to a couple who are Christians, but their marital relationship is bad. They blame each other and therefore, they cannot resolve their problem, neither want to do their part in order to change the situation. Luis and his wife did everything, but they could not help this couple. The couple had no disposition and attitude for resolving their problem.

Ministers from Tarapoto. **Jorge** states that our own marital experiences are an example to help other couples overcome and manage their marital conflicts. He continues: "from my experience I can help other couples". **Caleb** says various things, such as counselling with biblical principles, visiting their home in order to see their reality, and from their reality we might give counselling. And leaders must pray for families in church. Also Caleb says that the treatment with marriages is a long process, and sometimes, we can help and sometimes not. Erick interviews families and he attempts a personalized treatment. His counsel is based in the scriptures; by means of the Bible he shows that there is a Father (God) over every parent who can meet the emotional needs of the family. **Javier** refers to the counselling, praying and dependence on the Lord as things necessary for the treatment of marriages. According to Javier, the counselling allows the couple knowledge in order to help with weaknesses which can damage family relations. Also Javier refers to people who are married for many years, they resist counselling, even if it comes from the biblical text, this is due to lifestyle and training over many years of married life and family tradition and parental example. They are not disposed to change, but we have to continue

counselling. **Alfonso**, his church decided to give priority to the families because families are very important in the church, and for this reason, they made a plan to track families, especially those families who are passing problems. The church is committed to pray, to visit and to capture their confidence and friendship in order to help these families.

This extract allows seeing the concern of ministers about families in their churches and each one has his forms of work in the context of his church, according to the needs of their churches in the theme of family. Each minister tries to help families of his church, according to his possibilities and resources. Sometimes they achieve good results, other times, they do not. But they continue in this hard work with marriages and their families.

Fifth question: How could you help a dysfunctional family in the light of the Joseph story?

Ministers from Lima. Tim says, “we should not have cocky children”, also he adds, parents must raise their children without differences among them, parents must give attention and time to children in an equitable manner. In Jacob's case, he did not know what was passing with his children, Jacob dedicated more time and attention with Joseph and Benjamin, and Jacob had distanced himself with his other children. This issue caused rivalry and jealousy among his children. Families need to pay attention to not have cocky children. **Sixto** states that when a member of a family talks praising himself, that he will be a lot more than his father and brothers, these things will cause problems among family members. **Francisco** notes problems in Jacob's family, he had four wives and one was the favourite, and children of the favourite were the chosen of Jacob. Then, what shall we learn from the Joseph story? "I believe that we must give children time, estimation and affection alike; you cannot make a distinction between one and another, you cannot do that" **Luis** says that all the dysfunction was created by favouritism in this family. This situation was a product of the several conjugal relations between Jacob and his women. Now, today; remarriages are dysfunctional because each one comes with children of their first marriage. In this type of marriage there are children of three different conjugal relations. The couple needs to know how to manage this situation to avoid consequences in their new family. **Lucas**, for him the problem in the Joseph story was sexual purity and a father who did not know the relation among

his children. Jacob ignored the relation among his children. So the father's presence, among his children, is very important, also the father has to exercise an appropriate discipline with verbal warnings, with affection, etc.

Minister from Tarapoto. Jorge says "The forgiveness is the way toward reconciliation." The Joseph story helps to seek the reconciliation by means of forgiveness. Even if a couple is separated and they cannot come back together, they can have a good relationship as people. **Erick** affirms there have always been dysfunctional families, the Bible confirms it, and the Bible shows how God uses for good some dysfunctional situations. Also, the minister has to teach about the implications forgiveness and how the forgiveness helps to know that God can use for good suffering in the family. **Caleb** says that families must remove favouritism. Families have to concern themselves with forgiveness and reconciliation in spite of family mistakes. Also Caleb refers to honour towards parents in spite of their mistakes in their families. **Alfonso** asserts that forgiveness and reconciliation are highlighted in this story, and we could teach in detail this story, as an example to families, because in this way we would see that things which do not stand out much, can be very important to help families.

Ministers from Lima highlighted the problem of cocky children; this can cause serious problems of family dysfunction because the favouritism spoils the family relationships. To avoid this trouble it is necessary to dedicate time, estimation and affection alike to children. Also ministers talked about conjugal relations, these must be cared for by the couple, because bad conjugal relations bring consequences to the couple and children. Ministers from Tarapoto highlighted forgiveness and reconciliation. Ministers have to help with these to dysfunctional families. Ministers have to seek the reconciliation and the forgiveness in the couple and the family in spite of mistakes in the family.

Sixth question. Thinking of the Joseph story, Could God use a dysfunctional family in order to provide some benefit to the church? How?

Ministers from Lima. Sixto refers to a case in his church, where a couple who was not married came to the church and they converted to the Lord, but the man was married with another woman and this woman did not want to grant a divorce, but this man is a good Christian, he is serving in the church, he is an active believer and we put him as cells coordinator. Some people of my denomination object that this man is serving in

the church owing to his condition of not being married with his current couple. But we prefer that he is serving in the church. We are seeking a lawyer in order to help his divorce. This way, this man is providing benefit to the church and to us. And we look forward, that he will soon solve this problem, and we are helping him in the solution. **Francisco** says, God is sovereign to use us in spite of our imperfections. God can use dysfunctional families to bring blessings to the church, such as he did with Jacob's family to bless Israel's people, but also, we have to know or be aware of our limitations, imperfections and dysfunctional ties in order to overcome and submit them to the Lord. **Tim** says, "the gospel transforms lives, I was dysfunctional, but now I am functional. The Lord transformed me and now I am more functional." **Luis** states, a dysfunctional family is an example in two directions: one, example to other families in the sense of things that a family must avoid to not be dysfunctional. And the other is an example about God's work to transform a dysfunctional family. God has not limits; He can change any type of heart. **Lucas** says, "all families in the Bible had their problems, they were not perfect. This teaches us, if God blessed and used these families in the Bible, also I believe God can use us today." Pastoral families are not perfect. Many times, ministers' children are rebels, but, then they return to the Lord, owing to the gospel seed, being planted in their heart. "Yes, I believe God can use a dysfunctional family", but they must be guided in the light of the Bible in order to have a personal relation with God.

Minister from Tarapoto. According to **Jorge**, this story has to make us reflect about our family, How are we? How are we in the home and family? These things must lead the church to submit to the Lord in order to seek forgiveness and reconciliation in our families. I or my brother, we might be in a situation of family dysfunction. The family of this story makes us have more cared, more approaching to God, and this way, we can help ourselves. **Javier** says that we can see a dysfunctional family as a mirror to us, and in this way, we do not make the same mistakes. But, when a family achieved forgiveness and reconciliation, this family can be an example and challenge to other families. These families could see that it is possible to tidy their families with God's help. **Alfonso** opines, "always we will have dysfunctional families at the church, which will facilitate ministers to seek and have different manners to help families." **Caleb** states that God can use a dysfunctional family when this is example of change, transformation, reconciliation and pardon. This changed family will be an example to the following generation of fathers. **Erick** refers to a case of a dysfunctional family that

one of their children today has a stable family, this person is a minister. So, God blessed the church with a family whose father was from a dysfunctional family.

Ministers in both cities consider that dysfunctional families can benefit the church in different manners. These benefits can be negative or positive, they are negative when these families are an example of what a family should not be; and they are positive when these families are transformed and they achieve forgiveness and reconciliation. Also these families are a help because they make us reflect on our family situation.

Seventh question: After discussing this theme, have your concepts about the treatment of dysfunctional families been changed?

Ministers from Lima. After listening to ministers in this interview **Sixto** considers it was a correct action with the brother, who is not married, to whom Sixto put to work in the church instead of having him sitting on the chair of the church until he fixes his marital situation. According to Sixto this interview confirmed that his decision was correct. **Luis** thought that a family only is dysfunctional when homes or spouses are separated. But after that he heard his colleagues, now he understands that a family is also dysfunctional when members are not fulfilling their roles. Now **Tim** is thinking more than before, a healthy church must have an ambiance or cell for divorcees, because this problem is increasing in Peruvian society. The church must search and help divorcees whose families were dysfunctional. Also **Francisco** is thinking in a preventive work with marriages. The church has to make a preventive work to prevent having dysfunctional families. Francisco opines on this preventive work in the sense that the church has to do this work with families who grew up, met and married in the church. **Lucas** says that this conversation reinforces the importance to continue working with families in the church. He adds: “strong families produce strong churches.”

Minister from Tarapoto. Caleb opines that we have to take as examples families of the Bible, as Joseph's family, in order to reinforce our knowledge to help families of the church. **Jorge** says “now with a clearer concept, we must give more attention to the dysfunctional families, but we must remember that the process of treatment is long.” **Erick** affirms that this conversation reinforces our concepts about treatment of families. And also, that this conversation shows that family problems exist in all

churches. “We could have more meetings with ministers in order to discuss this theme.” **Alfonso** says that the Joseph story shows that the change in dysfunctional families is possible, but this change is a process, it does not occur in one moment. And this meeting shows us that the problems of family are present in all our congregations. **Javier** says that this reinforces our treatment with families in the church. “We meet with couples in order to hear spouses, they express their difficulties, and in this way, we can help them in areas that they need.”

This last question showed the interest of the ministers in continuing working with families in their church. This interview reinforced and confirmed the necessity to them to continue the treatment with families. They understand that the treatment of dysfunctional families is a long process. By means of the Joseph story they saw that a change in dysfunctional families is possible.

5. Conclusion

These two interviews by means of the focus groups allow us to see different aspects of the reality of the families in the context of the Peruvian churches. Each church and minister has his own perspective about dysfunctional families, but, also they have several coincidences such as all churches have dysfunctional families, the church must be more interested in the families, the Bible shows families with problems and we can learn how these families overcame family problems. The change is possible in a dysfunctional family and the nearing to the Scriptures is important for families because through them the Lord will help to change our families.

The ministers participant in these focus groups consider that Joseph's story can teach us a lot about the family and their different situations. For example, Alfonso understands that the change in a dysfunctional family is a process, Francisco thinks to make a preventive work with the families and this manner avoid future problems, Caleb opined that we must take these examples of biblical families in order to reinforce our knowledge about family and this way we can help them. All they consider that this story is relevant to help Christian families in the church. They say that this story is an example of a dysfunctional family and the church can learn this family in order to correct and prevent problems in families of church.

Joseph's story is an excellent narrative to teach about dysfunction family because this biblical family have the same problems that any family today, such as favouritism, bad relationships among brothers. But God work with this family to change its bad and sad situation for a good. In this story is manifested God's grace for with family. In this story can see the personal sacrifice in favour of the family, also the forgiveness and family reconciliation.

See full interviewed ministers' data on the page 114.

CHAPTER 6

BRIEF CONCLUSION

The biblical rhetoric is mainly found within narrative because the predominant literary genre in the Bible is the narrative. So the preachers must consider these genres at the moment of their interpretation and subsequent preaching. In this sense, this thesis was worked to show that narrative can be used to biblical preaching. The idea developed in this thesis is product of the personal observation, that the Christian preaching in my country, Peru, almost never uses the narrative as a method of preaching, but most preachers only use argumentative forms.

The intention this thesis is to persuade ministers to use the narrative as a preaching method, i.e. this method can be used in the Christian pulpit in the same manner as other preaching methods. Preachers could consider adding this method to their homiletic repertoire.

Preachers need to know that a feature of the narrative, is that, it is paradigmatic because biblical narratives are models and examples the God's treatment with humanity in different circumstances and experiences of his life. For this reason, the narrative is appropriated to the preaching.

This thesis was worked in the context of the Joseph story with specific reference to two pericopes: Gen 44:18-34 and 45:1-8 because these pericopes are the climax or transformative action of this story. But before I make the analysis of these texts and the sermon, I researched the opinion of several scholars about the Joseph story (chapter 1). This was necessary to observe how these academics focused on this biblical story.

The study about the opinion of these authors was important because their views on the Joseph story allow on to see different perspectives that this story contains. For example the themes of the preservation and blessing of Jacob's family according to God's plan and promise (von Rad, Scherman and Zlotowitz, Sellee, Longman and Patterson) helped to talk, in the sermon, about God's care of the Christian family today. Also these opinions reinforced the literary analysis when some authors comment that God's plan remained hidden until the moment that Joseph's identity is revealed (von Rad,

Alter). The opinion of Alter from literary perspective helped to identify some narrative elements, mainly recognition and reversal; these elements were important to elaborate the sermon and show the transformative action and then the application to listeners.

Greidanus' and Patterson's Christological emphasis was determinant to link this story with Christ and the Christian family, because these two authors take Joseph as a type of Christ.

Another important theme was about forgiveness and reconciliation (Alter) and justly these issues were tried in the sermon. This way, in the sermon was used some of these opinions such as that God has a plan for families and he wants to preserve and bless families, but the families need forgiveness and reconciliation to receive God's preservation and blessing.

In the chapter 2 I developed the close reading in order to have a good biblical foundation to the sermon, and in this way the sermon would be a faithful exposition of God's word. This close reading allowed us to follow the process of the narrative about its tension, climax and denouement and then to apply this to the sermon, i.e. that the sermon has the effect of a narrative plot.

The close reading allowed us follow in detail the manner of the storyline designed by the narrator, and in this way I could see his point of view and the effect that he wanted to produce in his readers.

By means of the close reading I could analyse the issue of forgiveness and reconciliation in a dysfunctional family. I analysed the process how this family came to forgiveness and reconciliation, then this issue was applied to the sermon in order to persuade hearers towards a family reconciliation.

In the chapter 3 I researched the literary analysis. This analysis helped to consider these pericopes from a perspective literary viewpoint, and in this way these pericopes were analysed according to their literary genre. The literary analysis searched narrative elements, mainly characters and their features such as their psychological or inner state. This narrative element was very important to give shape to the sermon, that is, a narrative sermon.

Others elements were the recognition and the reversion in the narrative. These elements produce the changed of the address of a story. In the story of Joseph these elements are given when Joseph identified himself before his brothers and then he forgives and he is reconciled with his brothers. Recognition and reversion were applied to the sermon in order to produce emotions and this leads towards the forgiveness and reconciliation in families of the church.

In the chapter 4 I produced the sermon and I attempted to base it on the investigation done in the previous chapters. The sermon was a narration of these two pericopes. The narration was developed inductively in order to produce narrative tension. I had to be careful to follow a narrative plot, that is, that the sermon meets the requirements of a narrative. And in this way I produced a narrative sermon.

In the chapter 5 I described some fieldwork done by means of focus groups in order to contextualize the sermon in the context of the Peruvian evangelical Church. This fieldwork allowed us to obtain important information from Peruvian evangelical ministers. The theme discussed was the dysfunctional family in the evangelical church.

I consider that the Joseph story is appropriate to teach about forgiveness and reconciliation for families in the church, because many families in the church have problems in their family relationships. So the Joseph story is an excellent biblical text to preach about the theme of the dysfunctional family.

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I hope that this thesis wakes interest in many ministers to add and use narrative preaching to their Christian ministry.

Finally I want to express my interest in developing other themes on biblical narrative in order to provide material for Christian ministers in the field of biblical narrative.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1
A COMPARATIVE TABLE

A comparative table of themes, theology, applications and publication dates of the various authors is given below.

Author	Published	Theme	Theology	Application
G. von Rad	Ger. 1949-1953 Eng. 1961	Wisdom self-control and faith in God. Preservation of Jacob's family	Theology detached from the covenant theology of Israel. God's plan according to his promise to the patriarchs. God's plan remains hidden, but then it is revealed. God provides preservation to life	Wisdom provides self-control for life.
N. Scherman and M. Zlotowitz	1977	God's plan of salvation to Israel by means of Joseph, according to God's promise.	God accomplish his promise. God raises a king and Messiah for Israel.	Events in believer's live is according to God's plan.
R. Alter	1981	Recognition. God and Joseph are disclosed to Jacob's family.	God and his plan remain hidden until the time of forgiveness and reconciliation. God guiding destiny of the people.	Forgiveness and reconciliation in dysfunctional families.
C. Westermann	Ger. 1982 Eng. 1987	To encourage the Israelite people to accept the monarchy. Wisdom from God, not in school	God is behind of the monarchy and preserves Israel by his king. Extension of the patriarchal narratives	Reconciliation and salvation of God to all people
A. Wildavsky	1993	Worldly wisdom and God's law are opposite	Judaism is a God-centred religion. Perspective political-social not theological. Joseph is an immoral, enslaver and ambitious man	Worldly wisdom versus God's law. Neither forgiveness nor reconciliation

Y. W. Fung	2000	Joseph changes from victim to victimizer. Worldly wisdom, not from God.	God is seen as an enslaver. Perspective political-social not theological. Joseph is a victimizer of his family when he enslaves them	Seek true forgiveness and reconciliation. But it is not possible because Joseph enslaves his brothers.
J. B. Sellee	2003	God works through Joseph to provide and preserve Israel	God is intervening during the entire Joseph story. God's plan according to his promise to preservation and salvation. God is sovereign	God provides and preserves his people despite of human evil.
T. Longman	2005	God blesses and preserves his people in accordance to his promise. A story to teach wisdom.	God blesses his people Promise and bless. Bless to preservation	Circumstances do not impede God's blessing for his people.
S. Greidanus	2007	God uses Joseph's brothers' evil deed in order to preserve a remnant for Israel.	Christological emphasis. Joseph is type of Christ. God's plan according to his promise.	Despite human evil, God accomplishes his promise of salvation because he is sovereign
R. D. Patterson	2007	Through Joseph God provides salvation to Israel	Christological emphasis. Joseph is type of Christ. God's plan according to his promise	Joseph is example to believers because there are parallels between Joseph's life and the believers'

APPENDIX 2

ANALYTIC OUTLINE

I. **Judah intercedes for his father: Gen 44:18-34**

A. **Introduction: 44:18**

1. **Decision:** ¹⁸Then Judah went up to him and said
2. **Protocol:** "Oh, my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not your anger burn against your servant, for you are like Pharaoh himself.

B. **Reasons of troubles: 44:19-23**

1. **Joseph's inquiry**

- a. **Joseph wants to be known by his family:** ¹⁹My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father, or a brother?'
- b. **Judah and his brothers give information:** ²⁰And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a young brother, the child of his old age. His brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.'

1. **Joseph's requirement.**

- a. **He wants to see Benjamin:** ²¹ Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.'
- b. **Benjamin cannot leave his father:** ²²We said to my lord, 'The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.'
- c. **Joseph's insistence to see Benjamin:** ²³ Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall not see my face again.'

C. Judah's report: 44:24-29

1. They demand his father accomplishes Joseph's requirement

- a. **They conveyed Joseph's requirement to his father:** ²⁴ "When we went back to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.
- b. **Benjamin must go with them to Egypt in order to buy food:** ²⁵ And when our father said, 'Go again, buy us a little food,' ²⁶ we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother goes with us, then we will go down. For we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.'

2. Jacob's life is in danger

- a. **The sorrow for Joseph is consuming Jacob's life:** ²⁷ Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. ²⁸ One left me, and I said, surely he has been torn to pieces, and I have never seen him since.'
- b. **The sorrow for Benjamin will kill Jacob:** ²⁹ If you take this one also from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring down my gray hairs in evil to Sheol.

D. Benjamin must come back to his father: 44:30-32

- 1. **Jacob's life depends of Benjamin:** ³⁰ "Now therefore, as soon as I come to your servant my father, and the boy is not with us, then, as his life is bound up in the boy's life,
- 2. **Jacob could die if Benjamin does not return:** ³¹ as soon as he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die, and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol.
- 3. **Judah is responsible for Benjamin before his father:** ³² For your servant became a pledge of safety for the boy to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father all my life.'

E. Judah offers to remain instead of Benjamin: 44:33-34

1. **He will become Joseph's slave instead of Benjamin:** ³³Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers.
2. **He cannot return without Benjamin:** ³⁴For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me?
3. **He fears seeing his father's death:** I fear to see the evil that would find my father."

II. Joseph responds to the intercession of Judah: Gen 45:1-8

A. Joseph cannot control himself: 45:1-2.

1. **He made the Egyptian servants leave:** ¹Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, "Make everyone go out from me."
2. **He remained only with his brothers:** So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.
3. **He wept aloud:** ²And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.

B. Joseph is made known to his brothers: 45:3

1. **His self-disclosure:** ³ And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph!"
2. **He asks for his father:** Is my father still alive?"
3. **His brothers were stunned:** But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

C. Joseph is reconciled with his brothers: 45:4-5a.

1. **He asks them to come near him:** ⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said,

2. **He confirms his identity:** "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.
3. **He tells them they are not reproached for having sold him:** ⁵ And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here,

D. God sent Joseph to Egypt to preserve his family's life: 45:5b-8.

1. **To save his family from the famine:** for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.
2. **To preserve a remnant from them:** ⁷And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.
3. **To be ruler of Egypt:** ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

APPENDIX 3**INTERVIEWED MINISTERS' DATA****Ministers from Tarapoto city****Interview date:** February 2013**Ministers:**

Javier Vasquez

Age: 39 years

Degrees: Higher Education, Master of Theology.

Ministerial experience: 7 years.

Years in his church: 7 years.

Church: Jesus el Camino.

Erick Vilca

Age: 37 years

Degrees: University, Bachelor of Theology.

Ministerial experience: 10 years.

Years in his church: 14 years.

Church: Presbyterian.

Jorge A. Vasquez

Age: 50 years

Degrees: Higher Education, Bachelor of Theology.

Ministerial experience: 10 years.

Years in his church: 36 years.

Church: Missionary by AIENOP (Iglesias Evangelicas del Nor Oriente Peruano)

Alfonso Cuesta

Age: 44 years

Degrees: Secondary, Biblical Institute.

Ministerial experience: 12 years.

Years in his church: 25 years.

Church: Casa de Oracion.

Caleb Cuesta

Age: 47 years.

Degrees: Higher Education, Biblical Institute.

Ministerial experience: 12 years

Years in his church: 10 years

Church: Templo Eamanuel

Ministers from Lima

Interview date: May 2013.

Ministers:

Sixto Navarro

Age: 54 years.

Degrees: Higher Education, Bachelor of Theology.

Ministerial experience: 23 years.

Years in his church: 49 years.

Church: Pentecostal.

Timothy McIntosh

Age: 61 years.

Degrees: University, PhD.

Ministerial experience: 37 Years. Missionary in Peru for 30 years.

Years in his church: 3 years.

Church: Iglesia Evangelica Libre El Redentor.

Francisco Vergara

Age: 53 years.

Degrees: University, Master of Theology.

Ministerial experience: 19 years.

Years in his church: 3 years.

Church: Presbyterian.

Luis Cornejo

Age: 51 years.

Degrees: Universidad, Master of Theology.

Ministerial experience: 15 Years.

Years in his church: 10 Years.

Church: Iglesia Evangelica Libre El Redentor

Lucas Grandez

Age: 59 years.

Degrees: Universidad, PhD.

Ministerial experience: 39 Years.

Years in his church: 3 years

Church: Alianza Cristiana y Misionera.

Raul Hinojosa

Age: 44 years.

Degrees: Higher Education, Master of Theology.

Ministerial experience: 23 years.

Years in his church: 13 years.

Church: Iglesia Biblica La Semilla.

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