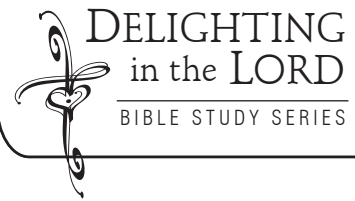


"The one thing I ask of the Lord - the thing I seek most - is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, delighting in the Lord's perfections and meditating in his temple." Psalm 27:4



WEEK 4

TRIUMPH OVER BETRAYAL

Genesis 41:37 - 42:38

Evening fell over Jerusalem as Jews throughout the city solemnly began to partake in the Passover meal. This was a yearly feast which served to remind the people how God saved the Israelites' firstborn sons from death when they were slaves in Egypt (Exodus 12). Jesus and his twelve disciples were among the locals who had gathered in an upper room to honor this celebration. This Passover meal would be unique from all others, because Jesus knew His time on earth was drawing to a close and there were many things He wanted to tell the men who were closest to Him. However, Jesus, troubled in His Spirit, knew a betrayer sat at the table with Him. The time had finally come to expose the traitor, a disciple named Judas. How it must have broken Christ's heart to look around at men He trusted and loved dearly, knowing that one of them did not have the same love and trust for Him in return. He knew the evil plan Judas had engaged in with the religious leadership. Judas somehow justified in his heart that a pitiful thirty pieces of silver in exchange for his friend, leader, and Savior was worth it.

Isaiah 53:3 prophetically tells us that He, (Jesus, the coming Messiah), was a man well acquainted with sorrows who understood grief. There are all types of sorrow and grief; however, betrayal can be a living grief which follows us relentlessly through life. Joseph understood this concept because he also was betrayed. Joseph's brothers, who should have desired to protect their younger brother, conspired against him. Today we will read in Genesis 42:21 that Joseph even pleaded with them for his life from the pit, but they refused to even acknowledge him. After selling Joseph to a caravan of Ishmaelites for a measly twenty shekels of silver, one must wonder what went through Joseph's mind as his traitors faded into the distance with each step he took toward Egypt. Betrayal must have been at the top of his list.

When loyalties are broken, scars are left on both the betrayed and the betrayer. This was certainly the case with Joseph and his brothers. Their motives for selling Joseph may have been fueled by jealousy and selfishness, but the next twenty years were spent with guilty consciences that hung around their necks like a noose. By the grace of God Joseph was eventually able to begin to heal from his wounds, unlike his brothers. Today we will see where the past begins to collide with the present as the betrayers meet up with the betrayed.



We must always remember that God is omniscient. He sees all and promises to make every wrong right, at some point, either now or in the life to come. If you have ever experienced the heartache of a broken allegiance, I (Brenda) pray you are given special encouragement from the Lord today through the story of Joseph's life. You are not unseen nor was your sorrow. God saw it and He alone will set things right.



R RECEIVING God's Word

Open in Prayer

Read Genesis 41:37-57 and 42:1-38



E EXPERIENCING God's Word

Experience 1: Seven Years of Plenty — Genesis 41:37-52

1. Read Genesis 41:37-41. What were the characteristics that Pharaoh saw in Joseph that made him choose him as second in command?

2. Read Genesis 41:42-45. Describe how Joseph was once again publicly revered. How is this similar to how his father had publicly honored him in Genesis 37?



“Jewish legends say each letter of Joseph’s Egyptian name means something. Linking them all together, the name is ‘Seer-redeemer-prophet-supporter-interpreter of dreams-clever-discreet-wise.’ More likely the name means ‘God Speaks and He Lives,’ referring to God’s word coming through Joseph, his own preservation, and the way he has preserved the country.” Dave Guzik, commentary on Genesis, *Enduring Word*, Blue Letter Bible.

3. In Genesis 41:46-49 we learn that Egypt is in seven years of abundance agriculturally. According to Pharaoh’s dream, after seven years of plenty a famine would come next. According to these verses, how did Joseph prepare the country of Egypt for what he believed God was going to allow in a few years?

4. Joseph becomes a father in verses 50-52. Look at the names given to Joseph’s sons. What healing has God begun in Joseph’s heart in regard to his past?

5. It had been 13 years since Joseph had been stripped of his inheritance, sold as a slave, and taken to a foreign land where he was imprisoned. From these verses, how did Joseph’s life fulfill Ephesians 3:20 thus far?



Experience 2: Seven Years of Famine — Genesis 41:53 - 42:24

1. A famine has taken over Egypt as was interpreted from Pharaoh's dream. Read Genesis 41:53-57. Describe the effect of the famine and Joseph's role in helping the people.

2. Read Genesis 42:1-8 and answer the following questions:
 - a. In verses 1-2, Jacob commands his sons to go to Egypt to buy food in order to save the family from starvation. They seem reluctant. We are told that at the mere mention of the word Egypt, the brothers all looked at each other. What can you infer from this?

 - b. How is Joseph's dream from Genesis 37 becoming a reality?

 - c. Which brother was left behind with Jacob and why?

 - d. How did Joseph react when he saw his brothers?



3. Joseph now remembers his dream from over 20 years ago. In Genesis 42:9 Joseph falsely accuses his brothers of being spies. Commentators have many suggestions for why he did this. Draw your own conclusion based on what you've learned so far.

4. How do the brothers both defend and describe themselves to Joseph in verses 10-13?

5. Joseph puts his brothers to the test by requiring them to prove their need for food. Read Genesis 42:14-20. List all the ways that Joseph's treatment of his brothers mirrored their previous treatment of him.

6. Read Genesis 42:21-24. What is still haunting the brothers and motivating their actions? How does this affect Joseph and the image he portrays to his brothers?



Experience 3: The Return to Canaan — Genesis 42:25-38

1. In Genesis 42:25-35 we learn that Joseph sends nine of his brothers back to Canaan with the intent for them to bring back Benjamin. In verse 28, one of the brothers sees that money has been put in his sack and he is afraid. Upon arriving in Canaan, they tell Jacob, their father, what happened in Egypt. They must bring back Benjamin in order to free Simeon from prison. Now they see each sack has their money inside. They are all afraid. Why is the money a point of fear for them and who do they blame?

2. In Genesis 42:36-38 we see Jacob and Reuben respond to the need for Benjamin to be brought back to Egypt. Describe both of their responses.

Jacob -

Reuben -

3. How do you see the sovereignty of God operating in these verses today?



TIME STAMP

Before the digital age, when important paper documents were received, a clerk would use an ink stamp to mark the time and date on them to stand as an official record of an event. It has been said that life events can also be like “time stamps” upon our hearts. Incidents that happen in life, both good and bad, leave an indelible stamp upon us and are not easily forgotten.

Joseph has many “time stamp” moments in his life. As you look back on this week’s lesson, what events would you say are “time stamp” moments for Joseph?



A ACTING on God’s Word

*“For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; then I could bear it.
Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me;
then I could hide from him.*

*But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance.
We took sweet counsel together and
walked to the house of God in the throng.” Psalm 55:12-14*

Betrayal is at the very heart of our study in Joseph’s life in the verses we studied today. Chances are, we’ve all experienced betrayal at some point in our lives. I (Stacy) have been betrayed by someone very close in my family. It’s one thing to be betrayed by an enemy, but quite another when that person is someone who says they love you and shares life with you in one form or another. Betrayal from anyone hurts deeply and often leaves a gaping wound of pain and confusion.

Sometimes that wound heals over time, but if another betrayal or offense occurs, it's like someone has ripped the scab off the wound. Betrayal must be addressed in the heart of the believer, or it will become toxic and affect not only our relationship with God but also our relationships with others. Let's look at what we learned from Joseph's response to his betrayal and apply it to our hearts as we desire to triumph over betrayal.

1. Betrayal can cause us to respond in many different ways. Put a check next to the ways you see yourself responding when someone betrays you.

- Defend my rights or position
- Replay the events over and over again in my head
- Try to get even
- Speak poorly about the person who wronged me
- Stew in silence
- Harbor unforgiveness
- Stay stuck in the pain caused
- Shut people out/isolate
- Ignore the betrayal

2. In today's verses we learned that Joseph had two sons named Manasseh and Ephraim. People's names in Scripture often hold great significance. The names of Joseph's two sons mean forgetful and fruitful. Let's look at Manasseh first. We are told in Genesis 41:51-52 that Joseph says Manasseh means "God made him forget all his toil and all his father's house." Let's look at how this word can be applied to betrayal.

- a. When betrayal occurs, why is forgetting so difficult?



- b. How does the enemy use our inability to forget against us so we cannot move forward?
- c. When Joseph says that God made him forget the troubles that happened in his father's house, he is saying that God has enabled him to forget his past. How is this possible and why is it essential?
- d. Paul said in Philippians 3:13, "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." How does this verse help us regarding betrayal?

3. Forgiveness is the key to God’s enabling power to forget the wrongs done against us. We will look at this more throughout this study. Forgiveness is a decision to fully release a person of wrongdoing. Our greatest example of forgiveness is through Jesus Christ. Colossians 3:13 says, “as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” Ephesians 4:32 says, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Forgiveness flows from our relationship with God. What is the direct command given to us by God and how is this possible?

4. Lastly, Joseph’s second son was named Ephraim meaning, “God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.” It was God who healed Joseph’s wounds and, for this, Joseph rejoiced and experienced fruitfulness. How does forgiveness from the heart bring fruitfulness in our lives and relationship with Jesus Christ?

5. End by reviewing your checked list from above and bring each area you checked before the Lord. Ask Him to first forgive you for these attitudes and behaviors, and then help you to forgive, forget, and be fruitful.



DELIGHTING in God's Word

From today's verses, how has the Lord prompted you to pray?

Write a verse from the chapter that God has spoken to your heart.

Close in Prayer