

W030117a – 05/27/26
Genesis 42-47:12
“The Life of Joseph-Part Two”

Introduction

- Tonight we will continue our study of the Old Testament and the Book of Genesis, remember

The word Genesis means “beginnings”

- And truly so many things in scripture have their beginning in the book of Genesis
 - The universe, life in general
 - Man, marriage
 - Sin and evil, Language, government, nations
 - And specifically, we will see the nation of Israel
- In fact, understanding what this book is about is the beginning is really a good way to divide up our look at this book

Outline for the Book of Genesis

#1 – The Beginning of All Nations – Genesis 1-11

The Creation – Genesis 1-2

The Fall – Genesis 3-5

The Flood – Genesis 6-9

The Tables of Nations – Genesis 10-11

#2 – The Beginning of the Jewish Nation – Genesis 12-50

Abraham – Genesis 12-23

Isaac – Genesis 24-27

Jacob – Genesis 28-36

Joseph – Genesis 37-50

- And tonight we continue with the life of Joseph

Remember when we left off last week, Joseph started out being sold into slavery by his brothers, he is bought by Potiphar and tries to serve him faithfully

- And when Potiphar’s wife throws herself at Joseph he refuses, but is then accused of trying to rape her

So Joseph finds himself again in prison

- And there he meets the butler and the baker and the candlestick maker (just kidding) of Pharaoh, interprets their dreams and tells the butler to remember him when he is before Pharaoh again - the butler forgets him
 - And Joseph spends two more years in prison

But then the day comes that God changes everything

- Pharaoh has a dream he can't interpret
 - And then the butler remembers "oh I forgot there is this guy in prison that can interpret dreams"
- So they bring Joseph in front of Pharaoh and Joseph interprets his dream, there will be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of terrible famine and actually goes beyond that and tells him how to implement national strategy to save the nation (I think he just hoped to be released from prison)
 - And Pharaoh says – well there is no one as gifted as you, I will make you the vizier of Egypt

And in one moment everything changes for Joseph

- He is made second in command of Egypt
 - He is given the daughter of the third most powerful man in ancient Egypt
 - Everyone but Pharaoh now answers to Joseph including Potiphar whose wife lied and the butler that forgot him, which would have been interesting
- And Joseph starts implementing his strategy to save Egypt by collecting 1/5 of the crops in the 7 years of plenty
 - And that is where we pick up the story in chapter 42

If you are taking notes tonight, the lesson tonight is brought to you by the letter "T"

- Because everything I learned about preaching, I learned from watching Sesame street as a child

Genesis 42-47:12

#1 – Testing – Genesis Chapters 42-44

#2 – Triumph – Genesis Chapter 45

#3 – Transition – Genesis Chapters 46-47

Let's look at these one at a time – little bit of reading, but it a great story, and the Word doesn't return void – my comments, sometimes they do... (story time tonight – we should have provided milk and cookies)

Genesis 42-47:12

#1 – Testing – Genesis Chapters 42-44 - Read chapter 42

- As you are reading – V1 - “why do you look at one another?”
 - I picture those cartoons when the friends turn into a chicken leg when the hungry friend is looking at him
 - Why are looking at one another?
- V 10 - We are Honest men – I'm sure
- V 37 – Great dad – Kill my sons

As we get to chapter 42, 9 years have passed since chapter 41

- the first 7 years Joseph is preparing the county for the famine
 - and for the last two years, he has been handling the distribution of the food to the people of Egypt and to those people of other nations who are coming for food
- And one of these groups of people who come to Egypt for food happen to be Joseph's brothers
 - And he is harsh with them

There are some who react to this story with confusion

- If Joseph is a type or a picture of Christ, why is he treating his brothers this way?

And the reason is very important for us to see, because, Joseph is a picture of Christ, and yet he is proving and testing his brothers and the reality is Jesus does prove His brothers

- He allows proving, trying circumstances to come about in our lives, to grow us – but also that we might see how we have grown

You know you get some coffee and as you get into the car you put the coffee in the cup holder, but maybe like I have, I know you don't do this, but I have transformed my cup holders into coin holders. It makes them both useless, the coins get the constant condensation dripping on them and creates this blue haze on the coins, so I don't use them, and then the cup doesn't sit down far enough and, well... you are driving and hit one of those deep pot holes in some of the roads around here, but as you hit these bumps in the road the coffee spills all over the floor.

- now the bump did not make the coffee, but it revealed what was in my cup
 - and so too, God often shapes us in trials, but sometimes He puts us in circumstances so we can see what is going on inside.

Maybe you used to swear like a sailor

- and as you grow in the Lord, you hit your thumb with a hammer, and “OH man” comes out of your mouth
 - you think – wow, I'm growing in the Lord
 - I used to yell perverse things when something like that would happen, but now...
- And God allows you to see the growth, through trying circumstances

Well – Joseph is doing this with his brothers

- in his case, because Joseph is just a picture of Jesus and not actually Jesus, he needs to see, before he can bless them, before he can bring them to Egypt and provide for them, there must be growth

And so Joseph is proving, testing his brothers

- will they abandon Simeon, is Benjamin still alive? – did they sell him too?
 - he is trying to test them - so he implements this test

Leave your brother Simeon here with me, go back and get this younger brother and bring him here, then I will know you are not spies

- So the brothers leave Simeon in prison and head back home - meanwhile Joseph has his men put all the money back in their sacks

And when they get back home and tell their father about this crazy person in charge of Egypt who thinks they are spies and has put their brother in prison and they must bring Benjamin with them if they want any more food, Jacob loses it and says, “all things are against me”

- And we looked last Sunday at the fact that although that appeared to be true, it wasn't true at all
 - Actually God was working for Jacob's good
- He thinks Joseph is dead and this crazy man has killed another one of his sons and wants Benjamin to come so he can kill him too
 - But in reality, Joseph is the crazy man and probably the only one on earth that loves Benjamin as much as he does is Joseph
 - And so God is actually working for his good

Which by the way, God is doing for you as well

- If it doesn't look that way, I simply remind you, it didn't for Jacob either, but God is good, all the time
 - And He takes all the things in our lives, Romans 8:28 and works them for good in our lives – such an important last Sunday – check it out online if you missed it
- Well let's see how that works for them as we keep reading in chapter 43...**Read chapter 43-44– as you read...**

V 8 – We see the growth in Judah here, his brother said, kill my two sons, Judah says I will be the surety

V 23 – Simeon is probably thinking – where have you guys been?

V 33 – They are astonished, I'm sure they don't know the math, but for Joseph to randomly put them in birth order would have been 40,000,000 to 1 odds – they think what is happening here?

44 V 28 – amazing -this is the first time Joseph has heard what his father thought happened to him, why he didn't come after him

The last time they saw their brother, he was 17 years old, he is now somewhere near 40 years old years old and he is dressed up because he is the Visier of Egypt

They clearly don't recognize him because you look different in your 40's than you did when you were 17

- Here is your pastor at age 17, yes I look a little bit different today and I am not in a totally different outfit nor suddenly speaking Egyptian, when the guy you knew before spoke Hebrews

How many of you look different than you did 22 years ago?

- Some of you think you don't differ – and then you see a picture – how about some celebs young and current pictures?

Pic #1 – How about Tom Hanks as a young man/an older man

Pic #2 – Jason Momoa (good looking in both, but different)

Pic #3 – Leonardo DiCaprio (almost the same age difference with Joseph)

At least all of those look similar, then there are those who do not resemble their younger selves

Pic #4 – Mark Hamill the force is not with you

- We have all gone through this, some friends get a hold of a year book and they find your picture and they say, that doesn't look anything like you
 - And you think – yes it does because the changes have been slow for you
 - But time has a way with all of us doesn't it?

And of course you add to the normal changes that take place in 22 years of time

- And add to that Joseph is in full Egyptian wear, he is got his head shaved, he has the make up on, he is speaking through an interpreter
 - So it makes sense why they don't recognize him

Joseph uses this anonymity to test His brothers

- now again remember why he is testing them??

Joseph wants to see if they have changed, if they have matured

- I mean last he knew them, they were throwing him in a pit, having lunch while he cried, and then for an encore they sold him into slavery - These brothers were wicked

So Joseph wants to know – are you going to just leave your brother Simeon in prison? Do you still have a younger brother Benjamin or did you kill him too?

- how are you going to react when I bless Benjamin?
 - did you notice that at the end of chapter 43, Joseph lines his brothers up in birth order, gives them food, but give Benjamin five times as much?

By the way, we have learned from ancient records the Spartans would give their royalty a double portion of food

- the Hittite empire would give their royalty 3 times as much
 - but the ancient Egyptians would give their royalty five times as much food
- And what is amazing to me about this is that was not known when liberal scholars say the Bible was written
 - It has been a very recent discovery that archeologist have made
 - So what that means is either the Bible just got really lucky with this detail or it was written by an eyewitness source, which just adds to the validity of the Word of God

But what is happening is Joseph is treating Benjamin like royalty

- This was the way Joseph's father used to treat him
 - And it drove the brothers insane with jealousy
 - So Joseph wants to see how they will react
- Will they be okay that their brother is being blessed or will they react like they did 20 years ago?

Will they be fine that their brother was the one with the cup in his sack and just abandon him?

- Or will they be different?
 - He is testing them

You see church it is okay to test people

- we are to be quick to forgive and slow to trust

Some of you don't like that – no, we are to be quick to trust

- no – we are to be quick to forgive – God has forgiven you more than you can ever repay – you cannot go around holding on to unforgiveness and bitterness

We are to be quick to forgive, but it's okay to be slow to trust

- If your spouse cheated on you – you need to forgive, you need to take that sin to the cross and realize it was paid for by Jesus in full
 - You can't carry around bitterness in your heart or you will be consumed
 - You need to be quick to forgive

But it is okay to be slow to rebuild trust

- I need confirmation you are really working late
 - I need accountability when you travel for work
 - Oh forgive me! – I do, but we need to rebuilt trust if it ever can at all

If you were molested by uncle or some other relative

- as difficult as it must be, you need to forgive
 - you need to realize that just as Jesus died for your sins and your sins are forgiven you
 - Jesus died for the sins that were done against you as well
- You need to forgive
 - But before that relative watches my kids, well there is going to be some significant time of testing – like a million years, but you see what I'm saying
 - It's okay to test

Joseph is testing his brothers and guess what? – they pass!!!!

- in fact, the greatest victory is his brother Judah
 - the one who married some pagan girl
 - the one who was such a poor father, God killed his first two sons

The one who had relations with someone he thought was a prostitute, but turned out to be his daughter in law

- And the one who, don't forget, actually suggested back in chapter 37, instead of letting Joseph go out of this pit, let's sell him into slavery

That Judah, who was such a wretch, we see him at the end of chapter 44, making a speech, (the longest speech in the book of Genesis – you say, we know, you read it all) Judah gives this speech to this man who he just thinks is an Egyptian ruler about wanting to stand in and take the punishment for his younger brother Benjamin

- For Judah it isn't about him anymore, it isn't about what he wants
 - It is about his love for his Father and his brothers
 - And so let me be punished in their place

And don't let this escape your attention

- because remember who is going to come from the tribe of Judah
 - none other than Jesus
 - and in this moment, Judah is the most like his future, great, great, great... grandson than he was ever before
- not concerned for himself, concerned only for the love of his Father, and the love of his brothers
 - Judah was willing to stand in there and take the punishment for them
 - Just like Jesus, almost 2,000 years later from this event would do for you and me, because He loves us and He loves His father - These boys have grown
 - And Joseph can't contain himself any longer

Genesis 42-47:12

#1 – Testing – Genesis Chapters 42-44

#2 – Triumph – Genesis Chapter 45 – read it

- Joseph sees the growth in his brothers and he just starts weeping – (You have to admit, Joseph has a little bit of his daddy in him, a little bit of a momma's boy, emotional)

You remember Jacob cries when he sees Rachel, he cries with her dad Laban, he cries when he meets his brother Esau

- he cries when he watches Oprah and listen to Mariah Carey
 - He just a crier
 - And we see a little bit of the family trait here in Joseph
- Because he is not just tearing up like most of us men do – we do cry, we just want anyone to see it
 - You are watching old Yeller, and the very end, “no pop, I’ll put him down, he’s my dog” - you know you wiped away a tear – “are you crying?” – no, it’s just a dog, I would have shot him years ago!”
 - That is not what Joseph is doing

He is wailing, so the whole neighborhood is going, “what is happening?”

- But even though that is how the chapter starts, this chapter is not sad - It is a blessing
 - This chapter is a chapter of triumph

It is a triumph of God’s plan – Joseph says to his brothers – “don’t be afraid, don’t guilt yourself - it was God who sent me here to save you”

- You see Joseph understood what Jacob was learning, that things weren’t against Him, God always had his absolute best in mind, even when you can’t see it
 - But in this chapter we see it
 - We see the triumph of God’s plan

God was working all along – just like He is by the way in your life

- And doesn’t that just give you great freedom, to sit back, be faithful right where God has you?

If the grand plan was up to you, well, I would be up worrying, fretting, sweating too – but how refreshing to know God is in control – even when it seem likes He is out of control?

It is so freeing to me, to think about the 144,000 in Revelation chapter 14

- they live in a horrible time to try to serve Jesus, you think your life is tough, but you don't have things falling out of the sky, stinging locusts running around and a world leader who likes to be called "the Beast" trying to hunt you down –
 - they have got it really bad
 - and yet God blesses them and uses them and the word says about them

“These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.” – Revelation 14:4

- it seems super basic, but it is surprising to me how often I and many I talk to, just don't do this
 - you don't have to figure out the plan
 - you don't have to figure out how you are going to make it all work
 - you just need to follow the Lord wherever He goes

When I see that, I think – I can do that!

- I can just follow the Lord
 - This chapter shows us the triumph of God's plan

We also see the triumph of God' Grace

- I mean let's be honest, if I was Joseph, I would have been so tempted to say, "I am your brother, you sold me into slavery and God raised me up so now I am the guy who has his own jail, stinks to be you!!!! - and now – payback time"

But that wasn't Joseph – friends – praise God, that's not the Lord either

- I mean how many times have we blown it with the Lord, and we crawl back to Him half expecting to hear Him say, "oh now you want me, why don't you cry out to the idol of yours and see if it can save you?" – but that not what we hear Him say!

I am so often moved by Jesus' words from the cross, but specifically when He is being spat upon and mocked

- He looks at the people, and then speaks to the Father
 - He could have said – “strike them down”
 - You just know there were 10,000 angels just saying, “give the Word, we will wipe the map clean of these folks”
- But instead of vengeance, instead of payback, we hear Jesus say – “Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they do”

Literally Jesus was saying – Father – don't even account to them this sin, they don't understand what they are doing

- And that so hits me – because I hear Him speaking that over you and over me
 - I go my own way – do my own thing
 - Symbolically spitting on Him, and His Word
- And yet He responds with – “Father, forgive Jason, He doesn't understand what he is doing, not really, he does not understand what a plague sin is, forgive him....
 - Friends – that's grace
 - Some pastors are afraid to share that with their people – because if you tell them, God loves and forgives – then that will make them sin more
- For me – It makes me want to do better, it makes me want to live in such a way to honor you – who loves me so much
 - Lord help me, change me, make me yours
- Well one more section tonight and this is important

Genesis 42-47:12

#1 – Testing – Genesis Chapters 42-44

#2 – Triumph – Genesis Chapter 45

#3 – Transition – Genesis Chapters 46-47:12

- Read chapter 46... As you are reading, skip 46:8-25 as it is a genealogy of whom was in the caravan coming to Egypt
 - The summery statement is given for us in verse 26

This chapter is the end of a 22 year trial

- I don't want to ever hear those two words in a sentence about my life
 - Joseph last saw his Father when he was 17 and now he is 39 to 40 years old
 - And they hug and just have a good cry – verse 30

This is an important section because it shows us how the nation of Israel comes to Egypt

- Jacob and his son Joseph are reunited and Pharaoh has offered to give them the best of the land of Egypt, the land of Goshen

Now the reason they are given the land of Goshen is Shepherds were seen as an abomination to the Egyptians

- it would be like today, if someone said what do you do for a living and you say, I clean out sewers – whenever there is a human waste, I jump right in, swim around, clean it up
 - if that was on a blind date and someone said that to you, you be like, oh, can I have my hand back – purell.....
- well in their day, to say you took care of sheep was kind the same
 - oh – you do what? - We are shepherds
- But Joseph wants them to be honest with Pharaoh and let him know what they do, because Joseph knows where Pharaoh will send them, to Goshen, Pharaoh says...

Well then stay away from the main population centers of Egypt, and if you have men who are good at that, well they can take care of my livestock, because I can't find anyone who wants that job here

- take the great pasture land up in Goshen, its far enough away from the main cities, plenty of fields for the flocks to graze, its perfect
 - and you see this and realize what God did

Because of their profession, Pharaoh wanted them away from the Egyptian population

- meaning what? – they were safe to grow and multiply and more importantly, stay God fearing people, not mix in and become swallowed up by the pagan Egyptians
 - it was all because of what they did for a living

Friends, I am convinced, what you are doing right now – it may seem like a dead end job, it may seem like you are beating your head against a wall

- it may seem like there is no future for you in this

And there may not be

- but I am convinced, where God has you right now, is tied greatly into what God wants to do in you and through you next
 - so at your job, just be faithful, don't grumble and complain, don't be part of the problem
 - be faithful – just follow the lamb wherever He goes
- and I know you will discover, man it was all part of the plan
 - you were working for my good all along – **read 47**

In chapter 47 Joseph's brothers meet Pharaoh and are honest about they do for a living and are given this land of Goshen

➤ and then Jacob is brought before Pharaoh and blesses him **This old man, the same guy who glued goat hair all over himself, got tricked into working 20 years for Laban, stopped 12 miles short of Bethel, at times wouldn't lead his family spiritually – this same guy is now standing before the ruler of the world, blessing him**

- not to be blessed by him
 - but to bless him
- I want you to see it – no matter where you are at tonight, the end of your story has not been written yet
 - If you are serving the Lord – keep going for it, you have no idea what God is doing to do next

If you are not serving God – it is time to repent and realize like Jacob, the end of the story has not yet been written but it can still be a good one

- The Lord is good and wants to bless as you follow him
 - The world is wicked and wants nothing but your destruction
 - And before we close our bibles, that is the last lesson I want to leave you with tonight

I am fascinated by the picture of how easy it was for the nation of Israel to get into Egypt as we read in chapter 46 and you contrast that with what most of you know as the Exodus story, how difficult it was to leave

- Egypt is like the Hotel California
 - Check in anytime you want, but oh, you can never leave

It becomes interesting because all throughout the Bible the nation of Egypt is a picture of the sin and the world

- whenever someone goes down to Egypt, it is like them walking away from God
 - from Abraham, to the people in Jeremiah' day – going down to Egypt is never a good thing
 - and yes – the Lord ordained this – God called Jacob to take his family to Egypt – God had a plan to grow them and multiply them
- But you can't miss the picture of how Egypt welcomed them in and then would not let them go

And I think we need to ponder that in our own lives

- Is compromise beckoning you to come and join?
 - Is sin telling you just once, just a short season?

See the contrast tonight – see the heartache and pain it took to leave Egypt

- See the pharaoh welcome Jacob in, and yet do everything he can to keep the children of Jacob in – may that be a Word from the Lord 4 you!
 - Because that is how it will be for you
 - Consider it well and turn from sin – Amen? Amen!