

The Joseph Story

Part 5

Genesis 41

41 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.” **42** Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. **43** He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, “Make way!” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

— — —

53 The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, **54** and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. **55** When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.”

56 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. **57** And all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.

- Joseph story is not one of overnight success.
- His journey from the pit to the palace was 13 hard years.
- This part of Joseph’s story reminds us of some important principles regarding promotion and advancement.

1. Promotion and advancement is from the Lord

Psalm 75:7 “It is God who judges:
He brings one down, he exalts another.”

This is not to say that hard work, preparation, good habits, and other human aspects do not contribute to success – they clearly do. Even those things are gifts and abilities from God and should be regarded with humility and gratitude toward Him.

2. Promotion and advancement is never enough without the Lord.

You can never be so successful in this world that you stop needing Jesus. Often, promotion and success reminds us of our need for Jesus more even more.

3. Jesus' is the ultimate example of promotion and advancement.

Joseph's path from humble servant and prisoner to powerful ruler becomes a prophecy of Jesus Himself. **Philippians 2:5-11** describes that ultimate promotion.

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

7

rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

8

And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

9

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

10

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11

and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

- Christ leads the way as our example. He humbled himself and made himself a servant, he was obedient even unto death and it is God who exalted him to the highest place.

Vs. 53,54

53 The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, **54** and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said.

- In due time everything Joseph spoke of came to pass...
- One thing is sure, time passes and seasons change, people rise and some fall. The tables turned and now Joseph and the dream he had as a boy began to develop before his eyes and come to pass...
- The difficulty Joseph endured was the thing that prepared him to lead...
- The actual scope of what God was doing for Joseph must have been far beyond anything he could have imagined...
- When God gives a dream there is a sense of grandeur, but when it develops it is even greater than imagined...

Vs. 56, 57

56 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. **57** And all the world came to

Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.

Genesis 42

When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why do you just keep looking at each other?” **2** He continued, “I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die.”

3 Then ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt.

4 But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, with the others, because he was afraid that harm might come to him. **5** So Israel’s sons were among those who went to buy grain, for there was famine in the land of Canaan also.

6 Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the person who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph’s brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. **7** As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. “Where do you come from?” he asked.

“From the land of Canaan,” they replied, “to buy food.”

8 Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. **9** Then he remembered his dreams about them and said to them, “You are spies! You have come to see where our land is unprotected.”

10 “No, my lord,” they answered. “Your servants have come to buy food. **11** We are all the sons of one man. Your servants are honest men, not spies.”

12 “No!” he said to them. “You have come to see where our land is unprotected.”

13 But they replied, “Your servants were twelve brothers, the sons of one man, who lives in the land of Canaan. The youngest is now with our father, and one is no more.”

14 Joseph said to them, “It is just as I told you: You are spies! **15** And this is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. **16** Send one of your number to get your brother; the rest of you will be kept in prison, so that your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth. If you are not, then as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies!” **17** And he put them all in custody for three days.

18 On the third day, Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: **19** If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison, while the rest of you go and take grain back for your starving households. **20** But you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and that you may not die.” This they proceeded to do.

21 They said to one another, “Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come on us.”

22 Reuben replied, “Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood.”

23 They did not realize that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter.

24 He turned away from them and began to weep, but then came back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes.

25 Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to put each man’s silver back in his sack, and to give them provisions for their journey.

After this was done for them, **26** they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left.

- Joseph knows them, They don't know he's Joseph...
 - Joseph is wrestling through the human emotions of what these brothers had done to him...
 - Vs. 24 says Joseph had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes... There is no indication that Simeon was the instigator of what they did to Joseph but this seems like a very purposeful selection of Joseph...
 - In the wrestling, the character of God in Joseph re-emerges and Joseph is gracious when he could have been ruthless, unjust and merciless. Joseph could have treated his brothers the way they treated him, but he didn't.
 - Much like Christ when he suffered unjustly on the cross, prayed for those punishing him, *"Father forgive them they know not what they are doing."* **Luke 23:34**
- Joseph hassles them causing them to fear for their lives...
 - All of them show signs of a God conscience...

Joseph says: "I fear God"

Brothers say: "Surely we are being punished because of our brother."

(Joseph's Brothers appear a 2nd Time)

Genesis 43

26 When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts they had brought into the house, and they bowed down before him to the ground. **27** He asked them how they were, and then he said, "How is your aged father you told me about? Is he still living?"

28 They replied, "Your servant our father is still alive and well." And they bowed down, prostrating themselves before him.

29 As he looked about and saw his brother Benjamin, his own

mother's son, he asked, "Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son." **30** Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there.

31 After he had washed his face, he came out and, controlling himself, said, "Serve the food."

32 They served him by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because Egyptians could not eat with Hebrews, for that is detestable to Egyptians. **33** The men had been seated before him in the order of their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest; and they looked at each other in astonishment. **34** When portions were served to them from Joseph's table, Benjamin's portion was five times as much as anyone else's. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

Storyline of Ch. 44

- Joseph has his servant plant his silver cup in Benjamin's Bag.
- His servants go after the brothers of Joseph to find the Cup.
- The Brothers swear they don't have it and say if any of us has it that person will be your slave.
- Joseph's servants find it in Benjamin's Bag.
- The Brother's are mortified because of their promise to their Father Jacob to protect Benjamin.
- They all return to Joseph...

Genesis 45

Joseph Makes Himself Known

1 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his

brothers. **2** And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! **5** And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.

6 For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. **7** But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. **9** Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay. **10** You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. **11** I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.'

12 "You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. **13** Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly."

14 Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. **15** And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him.

In Vs. 1

- **Joseph ordered all the Egyptians out of the room and then was alone with his brothers:** His great emotion showed that Joseph still loved his brothers and his family. Even though Joseph was dead to them. They were still alive to him. Joseph was truly glad to be reunited with them and to benefit their wellbeing...
- **Joseph made himself known to his brothers:** Joseph told them who he was and perhaps showed his brothers who he was. This may have been done with scars or birthmarks that were characteristic of their brother Joseph.

Vs. 2

And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

- With all that Joseph has been through, his heart is still tender...
- Joseph has not become callous or hard, that young boy with a dream to serve God is still in there...
- This is healing for Joseph...
- Joseph's healing comes from his ability to feel and show emotion when he could have been brutal and mean...

Takeaway:

1. If we truly forgive someone, we no longer threaten them with their past mistakes, or hold that over them.

- Joseph had determined in his heart not to harm his brothers but to bless them even though they were terrified of him.

2. Joseph had the power to crush his brothers who hurt him but he didn't, instead he told them to come close.

Vs. 4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me."

Vs. 15 and he kissed all his brothers and wept over them.

3. It was Joseph's great joy to make provision for his whole family in Egypt; to protect them and bring them in under his wing. Joseph served his family...

4. Not only did it please Joseph, but it also pleased Pharaoh...

- When we do what is right and sometimes contrary to the flesh, people around us notice it.

Closing