

*Turn in your Bibles tonight to Genesis Chapter 50. It has been quite a journey and tonight we are finishing our study of, The Faithfulness of God, The Life of Joseph, but also, we are finishing the book of Genesis.*

There are circumstances that come into our life that seemingly direct our lives in a way we aren't sure God is really there. God did you really mean for this to happen to me? Ultimately everything to the very smallest of details is in God's hands. What we must do is seek the Lord and trust he knows what he is doing.

As a 17-year-old young man, Joseph was given two dreams from God that revealed that one day his family would be bowing before him in act of reverence and worship.

The first dream of Joseph and his brothers were binding sheaves of wheat in the field, and Joseph's sheaf rose up and each of the brothers' sheaves surrounded him and bowed down before him. The other dream that the sun, moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to him. The sun and moon representing Jacob and Jacob's wife at this time. Jacob gives Joseph a small rebuke, saying, "Shall I, and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?"

Even in this rebuke, Scripture tells us that Jacob ponders on what Joseph had shared. I posed to you when I taught that portion of Scripture that Jacob did give some validity to Joseph in the fact, he had received his own dreams or visions from God.

We learned that these dreams only fueled the hatred the brothers had for Joseph because of the favoritism that Jacob directed towards Joseph.

The hatred Joseph's brothers had for him would set off a series of events in Joseph's life that would have anyone question, "God, where are you in all of this?" May I say in each of our lives, as time goes by, God is where he always has been. No matter the trial, no matter the tribulation, no matter the time of seeking, no matter the time asking, no matter the time of sheer joy, God is there.

The question for Joseph during this time and for us is are we going to trust God, are we going to show faith in God, are we going to seek God, are we going to love God? When we seek the Lord, we are brought into his presence and we see his character displayed in our lives, it brings to us a peace and a strength that helps us realize, "It's all in God's hands to bring a specific outcome in our lives and for many around us as well!"

We are at a point in Joseph's life and his brothers that this realization must be revealed to Joseph's brothers so they can continue to move on from past circumstances in their lives. Let's read our verses for this evening beginning with verse 15.

***Genesis 50:15***

***15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him."***

Over the past few weeks, we saw Jacob's final requests made to his sons, beginning with Joseph, about what to do with his body once he died. Jacob did not want to be buried in Egypt, but he wanted to be taken back to Canaan and be buried in the cave that Abraham had bought from Ephron the Hittite.

As Jacob's death was at hand, God gave him strength to proclaim a prophetic word to each of his sons. These prophecies would establish the beginning of the great nation of Israel that God had promised Abraham as God led Abraham out of his home country of Ur, to a land that God would show Abraham.

Through many journeys, trials, tests, deceptions, great faith, lack of faith, great trust, lack of trust, obedience and disobedience, joys and grief's, God's providential hand was directing this family to this day and beyond.

The prophetic word from God that Jacob shared with each of his sons in Chapter 49 were full of blessing and warning. If these men would continue to obey God and follow his commandments, there would come a great nation that would come to fruition that God had promised to Abraham as Abraham set out on his faith journey. Let's read that promise.

### **Chapter 12:1-3**

***<sup>1</sup> Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.***

This promise was once again proclaimed through the prophetic word given to Jacob, as Jacob proclaimed to his son Judah, that through his lineage would come the one God prophesied about in Genesis 3:15.

### **Genesis 49:10**

***The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.***

A prophecy of the messiah to come, the savior of the world which is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God who became flesh and went to a cross to take the punishment of our sin in his body, and experience the separation that we have and will have for all of eternity if we have not repented of our sins and surrendered our lives in obedience to his Word to the Lord Jesus.

It is that promise, the death, the burial, the resurrection of the perfect, sinless, born of a virgin, Son of God, Jesus Christ that all individuals, all families can be blessed, once again, through repentance of sin and becoming a true follower of Jesus Christ through submission to his commands.

Through these men would come the nation of Israel by which God would reveal to the world his holiness, his power, his faithfulness, his mercy, his promise of salvation. As Jacob completed his last words to his sons, he died. His sons, in one last act of love and obedience to his father, took Jacob's body back to Canaan and buried him.

After the burial the guilty conscience of the brothers, of what they did to Joseph, seems to come back to haunt them.

Did Joseph really forgive us? Or was he just waiting for the right time when he could get his revenge on us and kill us all! Now that Daddy is gone, there is nothing to stand in his way! Well, there is but we will get to that in a moment.

So, the brothers must do something with this thought they have conjured up in their mind. Now that they have thought of this, they have got to figure out what Joseph is going to do. Look at your Bibles and listen to this, verse 16 through 18.

### **Genesis 50:16-18**

***<sup>16</sup> So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: <sup>17</sup> 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.'" And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup> His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants."***

It had been 22 years after Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery before they saw Joseph again. Because of the famine they came to Egypt to buy food and Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.

Joseph put his brothers through some testing to see if anything had changed in their hearts. When Joseph saw that there was, he could not control himself and he cried out to them, "***I am Joseph your brother, do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life!***"

Is this the very point that Joseph forgave his brothers? I would propose to you that Joseph had already forgiven his brothers years ago. It is through the trials and tribulations that Joseph went through for 13 years that he had to trust in God's plan, God's path that God had carved out to fulfill the promise that he showed in the dreams he had as a 17-year-old young man.

Do you have unforgiveness in your heart? If you do you need to repent of it and get rid of it. I remember Pastor Kevin saying this about unforgiveness. I am not sure if it is original with him or not, but it is pretty good.

***Having unforgiveness towards someone is like you drinking poison and hoping the other person will die.***

Because of what God had done in Joseph's heart he could express this forgiveness and his love for his brothers. Remember what he did next? He told them to go home and get their dad and you are going to come back to Egypt and live with me. Joseph provided them with food, and wagons, and provision so that they could go back to Canaan and get their families and come back to Egypt.

When they returned Joseph made sure they got the most fertile land in Egypt in the land of Goshen to farm and provide for their livestock. We read in Chapter 47, Joseph even went before Pharaoh to make sure that he could set all this up and Pharaoh was like, "Hey, this is great! Your father and brothers have come to you! Yes, let them live in the land of Goshen. If there are any able body men, since they are shepherds, put them in charge of my livestock as well!"

Joseph's brothers and their families had lived in Egypt for 17 years. This is all me with what I am about to say, but I believe that Joseph would go up to the land of Goshen and see his brothers and take his sons with him. His sons would play with all their cousins. Joseph might have helped tend some of the sheep and harvest some of the wheat like old times.

What was his brother's problem? It appears they just didn't believe him! The brothers were so cowardly that they even sent a message to him at first. Now Joseph! Remember what Daddy said!

What else did Joseph have to do to show his love and the opportunity for them to ask for forgiveness if they had not already and for him to extend his forgiveness to them?

That makes me think of this for those that are lost in here tonight! What else does Jesus have to do for you to repent of your sins and you ask forgiveness for your sins and surrender your life to the Lord Jesus and then you receive his forgiveness by faith and become a child of God.

Can I remind you and I beg you to please listen?

***Philippians 2:6-8***

***<sup>6</sup> Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.***

Jesus left heaven and emptied himself of his divine rights, we say it this way sometimes. That he emptied himself of his glory, but in the fact that he is God, so he did not lose his deity, for he himself said that he and the

father are one. By putting on flesh, John 1:14, the Word became flesh, he then became submissive to the Father and obeyed what God the Father directed him to do while on the earth.

Jesus became a servant of God the Father but also Jesus served others through his life, his miracles and to the point of the death on the cross. Please remember what the death on the cross entailed.

***From Isaiah 53:***

1. Jesus was despised and rejected by men.
2. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
3. Jesus bore our griefs and carried our sorrows.
4. Jesus was tempted in all ways, but without sin!
5. Jesus was pierced for our transgressions (Sins); he was crushed for our iniquities (Sins).

***In the Gospels as eye witnessed by many:***

1. Jesus was wrongfully accused and sentenced to death.
2. Jesus was slapped, punched. spit upon.
3. A crown of thorns pressed upon his head that caused blood to spew from his head.
4. Jesus was beaten with a whip called a cat of nine tails, that had glass, bone, metal, edged pottery that would tear at his back to rip open the flesh to the point of seeing his internal organs.
5. Jesus was stripped naked and nailed to a cross, a nail in each wrist, and one through both feet.
6. Jesus was mocked as people walked by the cross. He came to save others, why doesn't he save himself.

Ladies and gentlemen, we did not want him to come off that cross in saving himself. For if Jesus came off that cross to save himself there would have been no hope for us to save us from our sins.

Then, the pain of all pains, the grief of all griefs! God the Father poured out all his wrath upon Jesus on that cross as Jesus bore our sins in his body. Jesus saw, felt and saw every wicked, evil, thought and act that you and I and everyone that had ever lived had thought and done. Jesus felt the separation from his father for the first time of all eternity and he cried out, "My God, My God! Why have you forsaken me!"

Then Jesus died! Jesus took the punishment you and I deserve! Jesus took the wrath, the judgment that you and I deserve! Jesus took the death, that you and I deserve!

You see something else happened though! If Jesus had just died, he would have just been another dead man! Three days later Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus' resurrection shows that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice of his life for the payment of sin.

Therefore, you have a way back to God! You have a way to receive forgiveness of your sins and surrender your life to God through faith in what Jesus did and who Jesus is.

What else does he have to do to show he wants to forgive you, but he will not force himself upon you. Repent and call on the Lord to save your soul. Lost person if you do not do that you will receive God's wrath for all of eternity.

Saved person! Did that stir anything in you? Did that stir inside of you to quit making excuses for your sin? Did that stir in you to quit cheapening the grace of God and thinking Jesus just gives you a pass on your sin. Saved person, remember Jesus said be perfect as I am perfect! God said, Be Holy as I am Holy! Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments!"

You're getting all legalistic on us now Pastor Dale! Call me or call it what you want! Scripture is very clear that we are to abide in Jesus, and you can't abide in Jesus with known sin in your life that you are making excuses for. I'm not saying we don't sin, but when we do, we are quick to repent and forsake that sin. God in his mercy and his grace he will pick us up, brush us off, pat us on the behind and say get back in there. You can do it! I am with you and for you!

Lost person! Saved person! What else does he have to do for us to surrender completely to the Lord Jesus!

Joseph wept when he heard what his brother's said. God weeps as you continue to reject his forgiveness he wants to give you.

I am going to say it again, Lost or saved tonight, we need to do what Joseph's brothers did when they finally got courage to come to him face to face. They bowed down to Joseph in a sign of asking forgiveness and said we are your servants.

I pray that God will give you the courage tonight, tonight, maybe even right now that you will bow down in a posture of repentance to God tonight and say, "God, we are your servants!" That you will have courage to not let family members, friends, hold you back. I don't care how nice they may be, if they are lost, and you are letting them influence your life, they are influencing you to Hell.

Joseph now responds to his brothers with one of the most known statements that most Christians know.

***Genesis 50:19-21***

***<sup>19</sup> But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. <sup>21</sup> So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.***

Joseph once again indicates to his brothers the sovereignty of God in all that happened in Joseph's life and his brother's lives. I already touched on it one time tonight but now I want you to see what Joseph had already shared this with his brothers and is now reminding them of God's sovereignty.

This again is when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers in Egypt and he just couldn't contain himself anymore.

***Genesis 45:4-5***

***<sup>4</sup> So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, who you sold into Egypt. <sup>5</sup> And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life."***

Joseph pretty much repeats the same words to his brothers in this instance as well. In verse 18 what posture were his brothers in? Bowed down before him! Did Joseph kneel with them? Did he tell them to stand up? Guys, I told you before! What you meant for evil; God had a bigger plan! It was for the good of so many people!

First, it changed me guys! I knew what God had promised through those dreams he would fulfill. I didn't understand the full purpose and how he was going to do it and personally, I would not have picked the way he accomplished it, but each time I questioned it, he would say, "I love you Joseph, my favor is upon you. Trust me! Obey me! I'll take care of you!"

I saw how God worked in your lives! It saved a nation from starvation! It saved our family to fulfill the promise that God gave to our great grandfather Abraham, our grandfather, Isaac, our father Jacob, that we would become a great nation and now after what Dad said to us, it is passed on to us to be a nation obedient to God Jehovah to proclaim his glory, his faithfulness, his salvation. Look at what God has done over these 17 years you have been here!

Joseph said, "Do not fear, twice!" I am going to take care of you and all your family. With those words all the brothers were comforted and put at ease. The family continued to live at peace in the Land of Goshen and in Egypt for quite a few more years.

### ***Genesis 50:22-26***

***22 So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's house. Joseph lived 110 years. 23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation. The children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were counted as Joseph's own. 24 And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." 26 So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.***

At the time of Jacob's death and burial, and the conversation he had with his brothers, Joseph was 56 years old. Therefore, Joseph lived 54 more years in Egypt with his family.

He was blessed to see 3 generations of his son Ephraim's family. Also, he adopted his great-grandson's, the grandsons of his son Manasseh, just as Jacob had adopted Ephraim and Manasseh before he blessed them. That is what is meant it is said, he counted them as his own.

Joseph, just like his dad, gave a prophetic word to his family upon his death bed. Joseph told them that God would keep his promise and they would one day leave Egypt and go back to the land that he promised, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

This is the first time in Scripture that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were named together. When God reveals himself to Moses in the burning bush in Exodus 3:15. We see this exchange between Moses and God. God not only says tell them, "I AM has sent you, God said this as well.

### ***Exodus 3:15***

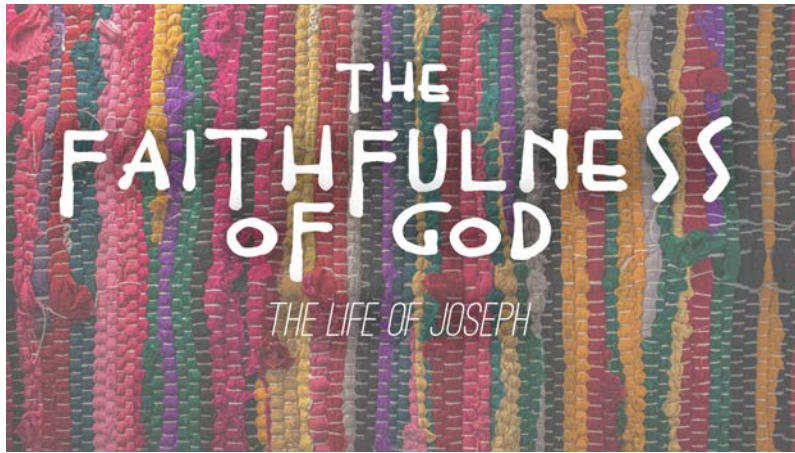
***15 God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.***

This is how God would be referred to numerous times through all of Scripture, Old and New Testament and that is the name by which God would be known throughout all generations. This showing to all people that God keeps his promises and God is faithful and God has all things in his hands.

Joseph asks his brothers to do something for him upon his death. Brothers, make sure my bones go back to the land that was promised to our family.

Just as Jacob was, Joseph was embalmed as well, and he was put into a coffin so he could be transported back to the land of Canaan at the appointed time the Israelites would go back. To jump way ahead. We do know that would be over 400 years from the time of his death. So, we come to the end of the life of Joseph.





With this portion of Genesis, we started out with a 17-year-old man who had already been living for the Lord. His father's favoritism caused dissention and strife in their family to the point his brothers hated him. He was given two dreams from God, that his family would one day be bowing down to him in honor and worship. These two dreams only escalated the hatred his brothers had towards him.

As I said at the beginning this set off a series of events in this young man's life that would test his faith, that would test his character, and that would test his trust in God.

Through each test, each trial, Joseph was being brought closer and made into the image of Jesus Christ. Through it all God showed Joseph his steadfast love and that All of it was in God's Hands!

We live in a broken, sin sick world. Because of sin there is disease, violence, sexual perversion, chaos, and death that comes because of sin. You here tonight that have not repented of your sin, you can chase every pleasure of this world, you can use every excuse under the sun to not come to Jesus and you can continue to being obstinate and you harden your heart a little bit at a time to where you may never get saved and you stand before Jesus and you are condemned to Hell.

Though Jesus has shown you his deep love for you in what he did on the cross for you!

Believer, there are tests, trials, and tribulations that we will go through because we live on this same sin broken world. It will test our faith and trust in the Lord, and we may question the direction that God is taking our life through these trials. It is through these tests and trials that we are shaped into the image of Jesus Christ.

It is through these trials, let's just call them what they are, suffering, we can cry out to God and say what the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:10.

***Philippians 3:10***

***That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.***

Whether it is sickness, a dry season in our lives where we may wonder where God is, persecution for our faith and that is going to come more fierce in the years to come, may we understand this from these verses in Romans Chapter 8.

***Romans 8:35-39***

***<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." <sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him***

*who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

We must realize that is a promise to the follower of the Lord Jesus Christ! In that we can take hope, we can stand tall, because after all:

***It is ALL in God's Hands!***