

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (November 12, 2023)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

Joseph wept. Joseph was a man of strength. Joseph was a man of wisdom. Joseph was a man with a lofty title, and life & death responsibilities. Joseph was a man whose faith had been tested by heartache and mistreatment. Joseph wept.

When was the last time you cried, sobbed, wept? I'm going to be vulnerable here ... to the point some of you may feel uncomfortable next time you see me ... I'm an emotional guy. I cry regularly. A well written scene in a movie, or TV show, can set me off. I hear a heart-wrenching song and tears flow. Even a sappy holiday commercial can turn the faucet on. I cry when I catch a glimpse of real life, real beauty, real sorrow. Sobbing, weeping, comes when those I care about are harmed, pierced, in pain, or have died. Tears do not always come, even when I expect them ... but I'm an emotional guy. This is even more surprising because tears were not encouraged, or even tolerated, as I was growing up. Some of that, I'm certain, was the result of my father's WW2 experience, and the loss of his mom at age 2, and his father at age 18. For him tears = weakness. I brought a measure of that to my own parenting ... I wasn't zero-tolerance, but I wish I had encouraged, rather than questioned, the tears of both of my kids, and my wife. I arrived late to tears and emotions. But I'm thankful I'm more comfortable now expressing both. How about you? Our Lord wept. Jesus wept. How did I miss that? ... or miss that He gave us permission to weep. He validates our emotions and tears.

Joseph Revealed Himself ... with Tears (Genesis 45:1-15)

¹Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, 'Make everyone go out from me.' So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ²And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³And Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?' But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come near to me, please.' And they came near. And he said, 'I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For 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.

⁷And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 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. ⁹Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. ¹⁰You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.' ¹²And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.' ¹⁴Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him."

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. What did Joseph do when he felt his emotions rising?
2. What did Joseph say to his brothers to prove it was him?
3. How did his brothers respond to Joseph's tears, and words?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

4. What does it mean, "the Egyptians heard it"?
5. What does it mean, "his brothers could not answer him"?
6. What did Joseph mean when he said, "God sent me before you ... so it was not you who sent me here, but God"? vv. 7-8

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

1. Look back over the life of Joseph (chapter 37 to this chapter) and look for times when Joseph cried (wept). Why did he cry?
2. Share a movie, song, sappy commercial, that makes you cry.
3. When it comes to expressing emotions and crying, how were you brought up? What were you taught about tears/emotions?
4. Do an honest self-assessment ... how comfortable are you with crying, weeping, showing emotions? Yours and others?
5. When was the last time you wept, got emotional? Why?
6. What haven't you cried about that you need to cry about?

As you spend time praying, remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural part of your day. Prayer is a conversation: talking to God, and listening to God. Thank God for the emotions you have. Thank God for your tears. Ask God to help you cry, express emotions, and trust Him. God is always with you, He will comfort you, and He will help you, because He loves you.