

Redemption with Joseph

Genesis 45

PW Emerson – 03/31/2019 – Ten:27 Ministries

This Lenten season we're doing a series on Redemption

- First we looked at Ruth – how redemption came to an unlikely place
- The second week we looked at redemption in Jeremiah – being reminded that God is the potter and we are the clay
- Last week we looked at the book of Esther, seeing how redemption came to the Jews

Today we're going to look at redemption with Joseph – the Joseph who was the son of Jacob or Israel

Many people are familiar with the story of Joseph and the amazing technicolor dreamcoat – it is a very well-known musical

The story is essentially true

It is from Genesis 37-50

It is a wonderful story of

- God's providence
- God's deliverance

It's a story of redemption

Let me lay out the story

Jacob, who was renamed Israel, had 12 sons

- One of those sons was named Joseph

Joseph is dad's favorite. And it showed.

Genesis 37:3

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him

Such a coat, at that time and place was

- For royalty
- A sign of leadership

That tells you what Israel thought of Joseph

How do you think Joseph's brothers felt about him being dad's favorite?

Genesis 37:4

When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

That's not a big shock.

Genesis 37:12-13

¹²Now his brothers had gone to graze their father's flocks near Shechem, ¹³and Israel said to Joseph, "As you know, your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem. Come, I am going to send you to them."
"Very well," he replied.

The brothers are grazing the sheep and it appears that Israel sent Joseph to check on them? It's almost like Joseph was the boss or supervisor.

It was bound to create resentment and significant ill will.

It got so bad that the brothers seriously considered killing Joseph but settled for selling Joseph into slavery

Genesis 37:25-28

²⁵As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt.

²⁶Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? ²⁷Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood." His brothers agreed.

²⁸So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt

But the brothers lied to their father and told Israel that Joseph was killed by a wild animal – and they gave dad Joseph's robe, torn and bloody.

³⁶Meanwhile, the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard.

Genesis 37:36

But God was watching over Joseph and was with him.

Genesis 39:2

²The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master.

The wife of Joseph's master was determined to get to Joseph.

And she wrongly accused him of trying to make a pass at her, when in reality, Joseph refused her advances.

Genesis 39:11-12

¹¹One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. ¹²She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

Genesis 39:16-18

¹⁶She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. ¹⁷Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. ¹⁸But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

Genesis 39:20a

²⁰Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined.

Here was a man of God whose greatest sin was perhaps bragging to his brothers about being dad's favorite, and the various dreams of his goodness.

And what he got was

- Brothers who thought about killing him
- Brothers settled for selling him into slavery with the Ishmaelites, the other guys
- As a slave, he is wrongly accused of harassment
- Then thrown into prison.

At the time of Jesus, there was great debate among the rabbis about how many messiahs there would be ...

- Conquering messiah
- Suffering messiah

In fact, the Dead Sea Scrolls talk about 4!

During the Talmudic period (4th century AD) the rabbis said the story of Joseph is a picture of the suffering messiah.

They actually started referring to the suffering messiah as the Messiah, Son of Joseph

They saw what Joseph went through as a sign of the messiah to come

Scholar wrote Elhanan Ben Abraham

In the Jewish worldview, Joseph has long been understood to be a prototype of the messiah.

The Messiah, the Son of Joseph

Indeed, Joseph is a model of the messiah, of Jesus.

Genesis 39:20b-23

But while Joseph was there in the prison, ²¹the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. ²²So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. ²³The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

Although it seemed like Joseph's world was crumbling around him, God never left him.

That's a lesson that we need to learn because we all have times when it seems like our world is crumbling around us

- People abandoning us – family, friends, etc
- Don't have a job
- Maybe struggling with health
- Feel like you've got huge problems and can't get any help
- Not sure what to do

God hasn't abandoned you.

God is looking at the big picture.

God is looking at our entire life AND more.

Maybe something that will happen will affect someone outside our life and we will never know.

Maybe we put something into play that causes a great event in our

- Community
- Country
- World

God hasn't abandon us.

We may not always understand WHY things are happening to us.

Joseph may not have understood why all the troubles in his life were happening.

But our lack of understanding doesn't mean God's not there.

While Joseph is in prison, he meets 2 guys who used to work for Pharaoh but were thrown in prison because they couldn't understand his dreams.

Genesis 40:8

⁸"We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them."

Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

So they did. And Joseph was able to explain it.

Genesis 40:12-14

¹²"This is what it means," Joseph said to him. "The three branches are three days. ¹³Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. ¹⁴But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison.

It took a couple years ... but eventually word of Joseph's ability to interpret dreams got to Pharaoh.

Genesis 41:14-16

¹⁴So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

¹⁵Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it."

¹⁶"I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."

I LOVE THAT!

Here is Joseph, a Hebrew and a prisoner, standing in the presence of the king, someone who could do something, and Joseph says that IT'S NOT ME INTERPRETING DREAMS. IT'S GOD!

Joseph could have said YES, I can help you.

But he never lost track that he is serving God.

Do we do that well when we are in similar circumstances?

When we are in the situation to make a big step up in life, are we clear that we are Christians?

Are we clear with others that our gifts & talents are from God?

Are we clear that we serve God?

If not, we may lose an opportunity to share God with others!

Joseph shared with Pharaoh the meaning of Pharaoh's dream:

- There will be 7 years of great harvests
- Then there will be 7 years of famine!

Pharaoh responded by putting Joseph in charge of ... everything. After all, if Joseph has these great understanding and insights from God, let Joseph manage their way through the famine!

Genesis 41:39-40

³⁹Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you."

The famine wasn't just in Egypt, it was everywhere, including Canaan – where Joseph's brothers and his father were living.

Israel heard that there was grain in Egypt so he sent a few of his sons there to buy some grain.

So, some of the brothers come before Joseph to buy grain ... but they don't recognize him.

Genesis 42:8

⁸Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him.

But Joseph was harsh with them.

He wanted to see if his brothers had grown up.

Would they sacrifice another brother to save themselves?

Would they act honorably?

Genesis 42:14-16

¹⁴Joseph said to them, "It is just as I told you: You are spies! ¹⁵And this is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. ¹⁶Send 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!”

The brothers go back to their father, Israel, leaving Simeon behind ... in prison.

Israel is distraught.

- He already lost his son Joseph
- His son Simeon is in prison
- Now his son Benjamin is to go to Egypt

Israel thinks his family is falling apart.

But they have no food and no choice.

So the brothers go back to Egypt ... with Benjamin.

It had been a couple years since their last trip.

The brothers were avoiding going back, at all costs.

But they could avoid it no longer.

Joseph tests them again ... to see where their hearts and loyalties really were.

Finally, Joseph reveals himself to the brothers.

Genesis 45:4-8

⁴Then 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! ⁵And 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. ⁶For 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.

Verse 14

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

Joseph wasn't angry with his brothers.

Joseph didn't hate them.

Joseph saw their actions as God's providence, God's will, to put Joseph in a position to help his people through the famine.

Joseph loudly said this to his brothers!

- Verse 5: it was to save lives that God sent me ahead
- Verse 7 “But God sent me...to preserve for you a remnant and to save your lives”
- Verse 8 “It wasn't you who sent me...it was God. God made me Lord and ruler”
- Verse 9 “Tell Dad, what God has done!”

We things are happening in our lives ...

- Things we don't understand
- Things for better or for worse ...

The challenge is to remember the bigger picture of God at work in the world!

- I am thankful, Lord **verses** I worked hard, I deserve this

- God's blessings to you **verses** Good luck
- I am going to trust/pray to Jesus **verses** knock on wood/keep fingers crossed

The entire story from where we started in chapter 37 to chapter 45, takes 22 years!

And through it all, Joseph sees God's hand at work.

This is a story of redemption by God!

God has promised that he will carry his people through.

In this part of the story we see yet another miracle; another act of deliverance, another

- I – don't – know – what – I'm – gonna – do –
- Where is – God – in all – of this - -"

circumstance

Israel and his children went to Joseph for food, for bread.

They got it.

In John 6:35 we read

³⁵Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Israel and his sons found redemption with Joseph.

WE have redemption in Jesus!