

# FEASTING ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

## A Double Whammy

Genesis 37 – 50

INTRODUCTION: Great to see you. Each week more new ones! We welcome you.

Still glad to have those worshipping online with us. WE MISS YOU!

Great to have more children. Bring the children. Don't worry about distraction.

So anyway, parents when you are ready from a safety perspective, do not hesitate to bring the whole family.

Our Country is in trouble! Protests that began in Minneapolis turned to riots, with looting and arson, and have quickly spread to many major cities by last night. (At least 2 deaths.)

The Church must pray!

1. Pray for George Floyd's family and loved ones.
2. Pray for genuine, thorough, prompt justice in the death of Mr. Floyd and for those who have brought death, injury, and loss to others by their unjust response.
3. Pray for repentance as a nation. (I did nothing wrong!)
  - a. Feelings, thoughts, words, deeds born of racism.
  - b. Hatred, malice toward race because of what some do. Black and white.
  - c. Pray for genuine repentance to spread across our land and for revival and for peace.

All of us who live in NW Florida have certainly taken a double whammy in the last two years.

- Hurricane Michael
- Worldwide Pandemic of COVID-19

- We need to continue our prayer that rioting does not spread here.

That is why we are focusing our attention on the faithfulness of God. Folks, who would testify with me that no matter what may come, God is faithful! Amen? Amen!

But although I know it, and would never dispute it, I still need to be reminded of it! And I think you do also, and that is why I continue to preach this series called Feasting on the Faithfulness of God.

I want us to remember this morning a man who like us suffered a severe double whammy. In fact, when you realize who I am talking about, you would probably agree with me to say the one-two punch that life delivered to him was far worse than the two blows we have received.

I am speaking of the man named Joseph, whose story is told in Genesis 37-50.

**FIRST, I WANT US TO REMEMBER HIS STORY AND GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO HIM.**

**SECOND, I WANT US TO SEE HOW JOSEPH RESPONDED TO GOD AND THE THINGS GOD WAS ALLOWING IN HIS LIFE.** Unlike Samson, who missed the blessings he could have known as God poured out His faithfulness all around him, Joseph embraced what God was doing and reaped more blessings than we will be able to count in half an hour.

**So, FIRST, LET'S REMEMBER THE STORY OF JOSEPH AND OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO THIS MAN.**

- **Favored by his father Jacob (Israel)** – son of Jacob's old age; firstborn son of his favorite wife Rachel.

**Genesis 37:3 NKJV** Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors.

- **A sinner like us**
  - At 17 he was a tattletale.
  - Delighted in his father's favoritism – wore the coat at every opportunity.
  - Two dreams – sheaves; sun, moon, eleven stars bowed to him. Sin was that he taunted his brothers with it.

- **Hated by his brothers**

Genesis 37:4–5 NKJV 4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him. 5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more.

Joseph sent to check on brothers, finds them in Dothan, not AL. He is wearing his favorite coat!

- Plot to kill the dreamer – God’s first recorded intervention – Reuben (oldest) intervened to put Joseph in a pit.
- Caravan comes by; Judah suggests they sell him, keep the coat.
- Dipped coat in goat’s blood and took to Jacob.

Genesis 37:33–36 NKJV 33 And he recognized it and said, “It is my son’s tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces.”

34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, “For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning.” Thus his father wept for him.

And next we read of the second recorded intervention of the Almighty in the life of this young man.

Genesis 37:36 NKJV Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.

- **Sold as a slave in Egypt** to Potiphar – could have been anybody, except for God’s hand and plan – Lord blessed Joseph and was made overseer.
- **Falsely accused of rape** – Again God’s intervention – sent to prison for prisoners of Pharaoh.
- **Forgotten in prison** – Again the Lord made Joseph prosper, and he became the chief trustee. Butler and baker of Pharaoh were there – two dreams. God gave interpretation. Baker hung, Butler restored, but forgot Joseph.

Aha! Did God forget Joseph? NO, the butler forgot; God was just getting things ready for what He was about to do FOR Joseph.

- Are things in your recovery from the hurricane moving slower than you wish? Karen and I are with you. We are still working with insurance and repairs like many of you.
- God has not forgotten us! God is just still working His plan for us, for our good and His glory!
- God cared for Joseph in prison for two full years, before everything was ready, including Joseph.
- **Elevated to Prime Minister of Egypt**
  - By way of Pharaoh's dreams – magicians could not explain
  - Cows from the river; heads of grain on stalk
  - Butler remembered Joseph! God gave interpretation.
  - Oversaw all. Prepared Egypt for famine.
  - Two sons, Manasseh – Forgetful – for God made him forget all the trouble he had endured.
  - Ephraim – fruitful – for God made him fruitful in Egypt.
- God, in His great faithfulness through all He did in the life of Joseph, **Saved the family of Jacob so they could be grown into the nation of Israel**

**NOW, THINK WITH ME ABOUT HOW JOSEPH RESPONDED TO GOD AND THE THINGS GOD WAS ALLOWING IN HIS LIFE**

- **Joseph accepted the role of servant.**
  - He had always been the favored son.
  - When sold as slave, he was nobody's favorite.
  - He did not begin as the house manager.

- Probably began with the lowliest of jobs like digging latrines and slopping the hogs, hauling firewood for cooking, cleaning ashes and food debris from cooking pits.
- Long before he supervised others, Joseph had to learn
  - To work hard without complaining.
  - To do a job well even if no one praised him or even noticed.
  - To be on time and not leave early.
  - To carefully and quickly obey instructions.
  - To be faithful to serve his fellow slaves as well as those in authority over him.
- Even after being promoted to the House Manager for Potiphar, God kept Joseph serving others.
- Even when he was the head trustee in the prison, he was still in a position of service, not of exaltation.
- As Pharaoh's Prime Minister, Joseph still served, not only the Pharaoh, but all the people of Egypt.

And why not? **Why would God ever take us out of the role of servant?**

**When the Son of God came to earth, He came as a servant, to seek and to save those who are lost!**

If we want to fully reap the blessings God has for us during this double whammy time, we must remain or become the servants of others.

- Have you noticed the staff of our church and some of our lay people helping in the cleaning between and after services?
- Do you remember how the staff and again, some of our people, staffed the tent, or cleaned up downed trees, or patched roofs after Hurricane Michael?

This is a time to find a way to serve others if you are not already engaged.

Joseph accepted and excelled in his role as a servant!

- **Joseph practiced self-control.**

- Joseph had to learn this.
- Self-control is needed in virtually every facet of life.
- Joseph's training came in the context of self-control in the midst of sexual temptation.
- If you are willing to be tempted, the devil will always make a temptation available.
- If you are willing to practice self-control, God has promised to always make for you a way of escape.
- Long before Joseph dealt with the physical temptation offered by Potiphar's wife when she sought to embrace him, he practiced self-control
  - With his eyes
  - With his thoughts
  - With his words
  - With his imagination
- If Joseph had not learned self-control in these ways, he likely would have yielded to the temptation of adultery. And he would have been killed.
- Samson didn't, and he missed the blessings of God's faithfulness.

- **Joseph believed his suffering was for God's good purpose.**

**Genesis 50:20 NKJV** But as for you, you meant evil against me; **but God meant it for good**, in order to bring it about as *it is this day*, to save many people alive.

- God allowed Joseph's suffering in order to save Joseph's family of 150 people from certain starvation.

- God allowed Joseph's suffering to transform that family into the mighty nation of 2 ½ million people just like He promised Abraham.
- God allowed Joseph to suffer to bring the Abrahamic Covenant to fulfillment which brought Christ and His salvation to be offered to every family as a blessing on the face of the earth.

**CONCLUSION:** God meant Joseph's suffering for good! Folks, ours is too! God is faithful to us as He was to Joseph and so many others we have talked about.

- **If we will trust that what He is doing is for our good and His glory,**
- **If we will practice self-control,**
- **If we will work our way through this as servants,**

**We will come to the end of it like Joseph.**