
SG020119

The Whole Counsel of God – Genesis 40-42

Got questions? Email Pastor Jason at jasonduff7@gmail.com

(You can download this message as a podcast by searching Jason Duff on iTunes)

Introduction & Overview of the Section

Introduction

Tonight we are going to continue our study in the Life of Joseph. Last week we saw how Joseph had a pretty rough young life. He was thrown in a pit and sold into slavery by his own brothers. Trying to serve and honor God in the house of Potiphar, Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph and said he tried to rape her. All things looked against him, but in our study this week, we will see how Joseph goes from a prisoner, to second in command of all of Egypt.

The Life of Joseph – part two – Genesis 40-42

#1 – The Prison – Genesis Chapter 40

In the prison, instead of being bitter at God, Joseph simply continues to serve the needs of others. This gives him the opportunity to be used in the life of the cupbearer and the baker, and although it will seem like they abandon him too, God will use these encounters two years later.

#2 – The Palace – Genesis Chapter 41

When Pharaoh has a dream that he can't interpret, the memory of the cupbearer is jogged. He tells Pharaoh of Joseph who is brought before the Pharaoh to interpret his dreams. Joseph here continues to honor the Lord by giving him the glory, seeking to minister to the Egyptian people who have done nothing for him and refusing to let the culture corrupt him when he is elevated in the nation of Egypt.

#3 – The Proving of Joseph's Brothers – Genesis Chapter 42

After the seven years of plenty, food runs out not only in Egypt, but in the surrounding areas as well. People come from all over to buy food from Pharaoh, including Joseph's brothers. Joseph recognizes them, but then puts them through a series of tests to prove if they really have changed.

Key Issues or Words

“Zaphnath-Paaneah” (41:45) – Some wonder why Joseph, a Hebrew who loved God, allowed himself to be given an Egyptian name. First of all we must realize that Joseph was a slave, meaning he didn't really have a choice in the matter. Secondly though, the name Zaphnath-Paaneah would be forever a testimony of the greatness of the true and living God for it means, “god speaks and lives.” Joseph's new name was a constant reminder to all in this pagan culture that there was a true God who speaks into our lives.

By the way...

Genesis 40:8 – “Do not interpretations belong to God?”

In Egyptian culture at the time of Joseph they had “dream books” that would be used to interpret dreams that they believed to be significant messages from the gods. When Joseph responds in Genesis 40:8 with, “Do not interpretations belong to God?” it was an in your face statement against the idolatrous culture of the Egyptians and their pseudo scientific dream books.

Homework 4 Next Week – Read Genesis 43-47

W020118 – 01/30/13

Genesis 40-42

“The Life of Joseph – part two”

Introduction

- Tonight we are going to continue our study in the foundational book of the Old Testament and really all of the Bible
 - Remember the content is not hard to remember, because the title says it all

The word Genesis means “beginnings”

- And truly so many things in scripture have their beginning in the book of Genesis
 - The universe
 - Life in general
 - Man, marriage
 - Sin and evil
 - Language, government, nations
 - Specifically we will see the nation of Israel
- In fact understanding that this book means and is about beginnings really is a good way to divide up our look at this book as you can see in your book intro sheet

Outline for the Book of Genesis

Chapters 1-11 – The Beginning of all nations

- **Chapters 1-2 – The Creation**
- **Chapters 3 - 5 – The Fall**
- **Chapters 6-9 – The Flood**
- **Chapters 10-11 – The Tables of Nations**

Chapters 12-50 – The Beginning of the Jewish nation

- **Chapters 12-23 – Abraham**
- **Chapters 24-27 – Isaac**
- **Chapters 28-36 – Jacob**
- **Chapters 37-50 – Joseph**

Tonight we are going to continue our study of the life of Joseph

- When we left off last week, Joseph has had some really ruff time - He is trying to do what his dad told him to do, to check on his brothers
 - And they throw him in a pit – he has to be thinking, it can't get worse than this
- Then they sell him into slavery, to the house of Potiphar
 - He has got to be thinking it can't get worse than this
- But then trying to honor God with Purity in his life, he refuses to sleep with Potiphar's wife who is throwing herself at him
 - Which I think, is the biggest miracle so far in the Bible – Creation, the flood, confusion the language, 99 year olds having babies – that doesn't come close to a 20 year old man, away from his country, forsaken apparently by his God, having some high class princess throwing herself at this 20 year old, hormones raging self, when everyone else expected this is what you do – that is a miracle

- And it speaks huge to the character of Joseph, what kind of young man this was

And you would think God would reward him, but as the chapter ended, he is thrown in prison, because Potiphar's wife, whom he refused, lied and said, Joseph raped her

- so as we find Joseph tonight, he has gone from the Pit to the Prison, from worse to worse - and I would probably have given up at this point, I would be questioning God
 - but what do we find Joseph doing, and how does this all end, well we will see tonight

For you that like to follow outlines

Genesis 40-44

#1 – The Prison – Genesis 40

#2 – The Palace – Genesis 41

#3 – The Proving of Joseph's Brothers – Gen. 42-44

- Let's look at these one at a time.

Genesis 40-44

#1 - The Prison – Genesis 40

- [Start reading in verse 20 of chapter 39 for context](#)

Notice the character of Joseph

- things are pretty ruff in his life, yet he notices what others are going through, he is looking to serve others
 - I mean how many of us would be in our own bitter concerns, hugh?
 - But Joseph is serving God, not complaining, and noticing when others are sad

This is such a key to walking upright with the Lord in trials

- the temptation is to become so self focused, so wrapped up in "woe is me"
 - But if you do – you will be devastated by depression
- The old adage is JOY – Jesus – Others – You
 - Listen, it's a little korny, but I'm into korn, when its true
 - Jesus – make Him your focus and your priority, we looked at that last week
 - Then others – we think we will be happy if we are our focus, but that is not true, some of the most miserable people in the world, who have the money to pamper their every desire, and they don't understand why they are empty
- Jesus, others, then you – it's not wrong to care about your own needs, just get the order right

Joseph does – notice what happens, he has opportunity to minister

- we think, why don't I get to serve the Lord, maybe you are so into you, you don't notice opportunity
 - oh you are so bummed out that you are not being elevated, that you are not in a place God can use you
 - Joseph has the right priorities, notices when the Butler and the Baker are sad, and an opportunity for ministry takes place

These guys, who were serving the Pharaoh, there was probably an attempt on his life, Pharaoh doesn't know if it is the butler, or the baker, or the

candlestick maker, so he throws them all in prison, until they can figure it out

- and these two guys have a dream
 - they are troubled, Joseph notices, asks them, they tell him and he gives glory to God, only God can do this, and then lets God use him
- good news for the butler
 - you are going back to the palace
 - Joseph – sees the opportunity – tell Pharaoh about me – no problem, man
- The baker says, hey that was great, I also had a dream
 - Well - Bad news for the baker
 - You are going to lose your head

The dreams come to pass

- The butler is restored, the baker is put to death
 - And verse 23 – yet the butler forgot Joseph

Again, I think probably earlier, but definitely at this point, there would be some bitterness in my heart

- am I weak, I used to tell people that the reason God grew the church in Paris Texas so fast was because I was so wimpy, if He didn't, I probably would have quit

And maybe you are like me, maybe you are stronger, but I would venture to guess we all come to times in our lives when we are thinking... “really God” – really

- I am trying to serve you, I am trying to do what is right, can't I catch a break
 - And the enemy comes with discouragement, God is not for you, God is not at work, God has abandoned you
 - And when you start to feel your heart believing it, then you need to go to Genesis chapter 41
- Joseph has to be thinking what is going on, but then we read...
- But God is still at work – shaping Joseph into the man he needed to be

Genesis 40-44

#1 – The Prison – Genesis 40

#2 – The Palace – Genesis 41

- **And then 41:1 – “it came to pass” – just stop right there**
 - This verse is so comforting to me in trials... things get bad, circumstances hard - I know God is at work - but it's hard
 - Precious one, eventually it will come to pass
 - I don't want to be embarrassed when it doesn't, I want God to say, well done, don't you???

Pharaoh has a dream, and no one can interpret the dream, to which the butler says, I am having a vague memory, though.... There is this guy in prison who interprets dreams

- Oh man – I forgot
 - So they bring Joseph out
 - And Pharaoh says, I hear you can interpret dreams
- And Joseph says, no, only God can

Now this is pretty bold

- because remember who the people think Pharaoh is, they think he is a God
 - but Joseph is pointing out if your God needs to call in an expert because he can't deal with your problem, not a very good God
 - oh – I don't do money troubles, talk to Charles Schwab, what????

God will do it, Pharaoh

- and God does, he interprets Pharaoh's dream
 - and then beyond that, Joseph then gives him strategic national policy advice, I'm mean this is bold for a slave
 - not only will I tell you what the dream means, but then I am going to give you the way to fix your national crisis

And even Pharaoh can see, there is something different about this guy

- and in one moment everything changes for Joseph
 - I mean he's probably malnourished, probably beaten on a regular basis, wonders if he will ever see the light of day
 - And in one moment he is second in command of Egypt
- IN one moment, he becomes a hip-hop star
 - Didn't you see – verses 42-43
 - He gets a gold chain
 - He gets a fly ride
 - He even has a posse, going before him saying, "Bow the knee, here come Joseph G", that is what a posse does – right, I don't know I don't have a posse
- But Joseph has gone Truly Holly Wood story, from the Prison to the Palace, because every good hip-hop story starts in prison, right, so with Joseph

13 years of slavery and prison

- and although we don't have a record of it, I promise you, there were nights when Joseph looked up into heaven and thought, God what are you doing?
 - I want to trust you, but what are you doing?
 - And all those nights of wondering, all those days of faithfulness when it looked like no one cared
- In one day, in one moment, it all made sense

And I mention that to you, because I believe for some of you, this will be your story

- years of being faithful in the background
 - going through hard times and tragedy
 - without shaking your fist at the heavens
 - with just simple faith, God I know you are for me
- and friends, if you are there, you keep being faithful, don't you grow weary in well doing
 - because I believe in one moment – things can change

And when they do, I don't know about you, but I don't want to be embarrassed of the way I acted, I don't want God to find me in some corner having a pity party

- I want God to find me doing what I always have been doing, just serving Him
 - Lord if you want me to serve you in the pit, in the prison – I will obey, blessed be the name of the Lord

- And you choose to have me serve in the palace, well, blessed be the name of Lord

Because I really believe church, to the Lord, He doesn't really care where you get to serve Him, who many people are effected, but are you being faithful to what He called you to do?

- are you being faithful in that hard marriage

Are you being faithful in that dead end job?

- Are you being faithful when no one cares, and no one is there to pat you on the back
 - Because some does care, His name is Jesus
 - And when He comes, when it comes to pass, and it will, it may be tomorrow, it might not be until you see Him in glory, but it will come to pass, and His reward will be with Him, and that is what you will care about
 - We need to take encouragement from this tonight

It is the Lord, it's the Lord, it's the Lord

- the same one you and I worship
 - the one that was directing Joseph's life, is the same one in control of our lives
 - Rest in Him, Look to Him – for you, your families, your ministries

My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweet frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name – On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand

Genesis 40-44

#1 – The Prison – Genesis 40

#2 – The Palace – Genesis 41

#3 – The Proving of Joseph's Brothers – Gen. 42

- [Read chapter 42](#)
- as we get to chapter 42, 9 years have passed
 - the first 7 he is preparing country for the famine
 - and for the last two, he has been handling the distribution of the food to the people of Egypt and to those people of other nations who are coming for food
- And one of these groups of people who come to Egypt for food happen to be Joseph's brothers

There are some who react to this story with confusion

- If Joseph is a type or a picture of Christ, why is he treating his brothers this way
 - And the reason is very important for us to see, because, Joseph is a picture of Christ, and the reality is Jesus does prove His brothers

Friends the Lord does this with you and me

- He allows proving, trying circumstances to come about in our lives, to grow us – but also that we might see how we have grown

The other day I went to get some coffee for myself and my wife and as I got into the car I went to put the coffee in the cup holders, but I have, I know you don't do this, but I have transformed my cup holders into coin holders. It makes both useless, the coins get the constant condensation dripping on them and creates this blue haze on the coins, so I

don't use them, and then the cup doesn't sit down far enough and, well... I was driving and hit one of those deep speed ditches in Turtle Creek and bam, Christy's coffee (no, it was mine, but if she wouldn't order decafe, it may have been hers) but mine flew up and spilled all over the floor.

- now the bump did not make the coffee, but it revealed what was in my cup
 - and so too, God often shapes us in trials, but sometimes He puts in circumstances so we can see what is going on inside.

Maybe you used to swear like a sailor

- and so you hit your thumb with a hammer, and "OH man comes out of your mouth"
 - you think – wow, I'm growing in the Lord
 - I used to yell perverse things when something like that would happen, but now...
- And God allows you to see the growth, through trying circumstances

Well – Joseph is doing this with his brothers

- in his case, he needs to see, before he can bless them, before he can bring them to Egypt and provide for them, their must be growth
 - and Joseph proves his brothers – will they abandon Simeon, is Benjamin still alive???

Well – at the same time as Joseph is proving his brothers, God is proving Jacob who says "I know all things are against me

I was reading an article the other day that was discussing things we think we know, but the reality is far different

- Dogs year 7 to 1 – not really
 - Many dog species live to be 35, making them 245 years old using the model
- "You eat like a bird" – meaning you eat a little bit –
 - but actually most bird species eat ½ their body weight every day – huge amount of food
- Ostriches bury their head in the sand when they are afraid
 - No, they put their head on the ground to listen to what is happening
- Moths don't eat clothes
 - Their larva do (I will never wear a shirt again)
- Lightning never strikes twice in the same place
 - No way – half dome, it hit hundreds of time in one season
 - Park ranger in Wyoming – struck 7 times according to the Guinness book of world records, how would you like to have that one
- My personal favorite – how tall was Napoleon Bonaparte – people say short people have a Napoleon complex – how tall was he
 - Now history records he was 5-3 at death
 - But medical records record he was 5-6 when entering military service – so what that is short

French army had a height requirement of 4-10, half the population did not qualify – he was big for his day

Sometimes what we think we know, is not really true at all

- At that is certainly true for our statement Jacob makes – all things are against me
 - Of course we can understand why he said this

It certainly did look like everything was against him

- if you remember the story – his son Joseph is thrown into a pit and then sold into slavery
 - of course Jacob thinks, because his sons lied to him, that he was torn apart by wild animals
- Now years later, after living in the promise land where God has called him to be – his favorite wife is dead, he thinks his favorite son is dead
 - And now famine has hit the land
 - So he sends his sons down to Egypt to buy food, but the ruler of the land (who is really Joseph, but the brothers don't recognize him) speaks roughly to the brothers, accuses them of being spies, and to prove they are not, he imprisons one brother – Simeon (who is probably dead), and will not release him until they bring their youngest son – Benjamin, the full brother of Joseph, the only son left from his favorite wife, down to Egypt – where Jacob knows he will be killed as well
- But Jacob says, “**All things are against me!!!!**”

We can understand what Jacob is feeling – we have been there

- but friends, here is the reality – all things were not against him
 - actually everything was working out in his favor

His son Joseph was not dead

- In fact God has raised him up to be a ruler over Egypt
 - Simeon was not dead – it was his brother holding him captive, not some strange ruler

Benjamin was not going to be killed

- If there was anyone who loved Benny as much as dear old dad, it was his full brother Joseph

And even the famine

- why, when I'm serving God does everything seem to crash in around me???
- We are hit with a huge famine
- Oh – but it is the famine that gave the opportunity for his son to become a ruler
 - It was the famine that sent the brothers to Joseph which sets this whole thing in motion
- It was the famine – that will create the need for Jacob to move his entire family to Egypt because – where they can be safe, provided for – and multiply to a nation of almost 2 million when the book of Exodus opens
 - Everything is actually for you, Jacob

Friends, this is not just true for Jacob, or Joseph

- it is true for you and me as well
 - there are many things we don't know, even things we think we know (don't tell me about the larva again, please) – I won't, but we don't – so much we don't know
- but there is something we are told we can know for certain, without a doubt – Turn to Romans 8

- **Romans 8:28, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are the called according to His purpose”**

The term “work together” is the Greek word *sunergo*, we get our English word synergism from it, and it means the product of two things put together and becoming greater and even completely different than they were separate

A classic example would be when you take sodium and chlorine. You can't, don't want to eat those by themselves, they are both poisons. But if you synergise them together you get sodium chloride or table salt.

I want you to notice, Romans 8:28 does not say all things are good.

- baby is killed by a psycho, for no reason, that is not good
- **certain things in your life** – they are not good.
- man goes into a school and starts shooting people, that is not good,
- and I get upset, because the news crews always find the weirdest Christian to say, “Praise God, this is what He wanted.” Stop it. It's not God, It's sin and evil.
- But what God does, and understand this, He takes all those things – the good, the bad, the evil, and the ugly, and He synergises them together and as it says “for good.”

Paul is getting you and me to see that this is the way the Lord works

- But why does He do it this way, instead of just giving us good things
 - I mean, He is God, He could have...
 - You're right – there is a purpose
- And as we back off for just a minute, we need to understand why the Lord works this way
 - Why did Joseph go through all He did?
 - Why was Jacob going through all the turmoil that he was
- And more importantly for us, lets be honest, why are we going through all that we are going through?
 - Write down these things that will also be on the screen

Why does God so often operate this way???

#1 God is working out your physical location

- for Joseph, the pit lead to the prison, which lead to the palace
 - a place he would have never been in if he had lived the good life with his father in Hebron
 - For Jacob, the years of disappointment were taking him closer to his son, not further away

God does the same thing in all of us – He is working out your physical location

- for me – I questioned a lot growing up, God – why did my Dad have to leave - why was stepfather so mean to us growing up (We are good now) – but it was hard many times growing up
 - it didn't make any sense

My Mom went in for counseling at a church I had never attended - Calvary Chapel Vista. The pastor, wisely wanted to here more sides of the story, so asked her if he could meet

with me. After confirming what she has said was correct, he asked me my story – I was just going through a break up (which included my employment). He said do you want to serve here. Why not. There I would become the Youth pastor but more than that – Vista was a sending church – and we planted the church in Texas and then God brought me back this way - But follow it back

- I am here, because my step dad was mean – thank him, if you ever get to meet him

God allows us to face certain things because #1 – He is working out our location physically

- But you see that is not it

Why does God so often operate this way???

#1 - God is working out your physical location

#2 – God is working on what we are spiritually

- Joseph would not have been the ruler he was without the years of pain and preparation

- Moses needed 40 years in the wilderness to make him the great deliver

David needed 17 years of being hunted through the wilderness by Saul, before he could be the King Israel needed him to be

I mentioned just a moment ago that in Bible college I went through a nasty break up. Poor girl, we would argue constantly. My friends would say “what are you thinking, if you argue this much while you are just dating what is marriage going to be like, when she is picking up your nasty sock and smelling your morning breath. And I eventually saw their wisdom – but because of so many years with my step dad, the way I knew to argue was to yell. And I would yell. But as that would happen, God was working on me. What are you doing? Why are you treating this girl this way? Don’t yell at her. And then we would flight again, and again, and again. But each time – God was ripping out a little bit of my flesh, teaching me to die to self, to honor people you were talking to. And then we broke up – and I thought what a waste of time, why did you allow me to go through all of that

Then years later I met Christy – feel in love, the most gentle, soft spirit I have ever seen. And we never fought at first

- I’ve told some of you our first fight was almost a year into our marriage, and it was over checkers – she cheated, she won’t tell you that, she did
 - And as we began to argue, I started to get a little excited, now you have to understand – level of yelling this was about a 2 – she starts crying – why are you yelling at me – no one has ever yelled at me (Yelling, that wasn’t yelling, I’ll show.. - no one – your dad???? – then I remember – he is gentle – black belt no wimp, story for another time – never gets upset)

Right then it clicked – God, I see why you took me through all that chipping away of my flesh and growing spiritually in the way I handled disagreements

- If I had yelled at Christy the way I could, I may have killed her
 - God knew that friends, and so He allowed choices I made that weren’t the best, sin I had been effected by as a child – be worked together, for something radically good

He does this in our lives, and there is a moment when it clicks

- Jacob who right now is saying, “Every thing is against me!!!!”

- Next week will very shortly realize when he hears “Joseph is alive” – it will click for him – that is why this happened, that is why that took place – I get it
- For Joseph – when he gets before Pharaoh and interprets the dream, thinking maybe I will get to go home now and see Dad, all of a sudden hears – you are the man to rule
 - It clicked – that is why I had to be in the pit, that is why even when I lied about and wondered where God was, he was there, preparing me for something I could not imagine
 - I get it, it clicked

Now you might say, - Jason I hear you – but here is my reality – I am not going to rule Egypt, I’m just a housewife trying to get by. I just work down at the local store, trying to provide for my family

- and I hear what your saying about David, Moses, Joseph, and even you
 - but that’s not my lot in life
 - I am not going to be the deliver for a group of people, I am not going to be King, I’m not even going to be a pastor like you
- And so what I am saying is that the pain might be worth it in the end for someone like you – but I don’t really see the value, I don’t see why I have to face such things as I do – when God isn’t going to make me a king or a minister..
 - Oh friends see this last thing and then we will be done...

God is working all things together, allowing circumstances, hard circumstances to come about in your life - why

#1 – Sometimes To work out our location physically

#2 - Sometimes it is to get us to where we need to be spiritually

- But there is one more, get it into your heart
 - Not just physically, not just spiritually
 - But friends...

Why does God so often operate this way???

#1 - God is working out your physical location

#2 – God is working on what we are spiritually

#3 – God is preparing you for what you will do eternally

You have an eternal destiny

- do you remember Matthew 25 where the faithful stewards come before the Lord and Jesus says, “you have been faithful over a few things.” I will make you ruler over many”
 - I believe that was not a parable, that was a picture of what heaven will be like

In Revelation 20:6, it says speaking about us, “they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” – Revelation 20:6

- You are going to rule and reign with Christ
 - The trials you face certainly produce valuable things for this life
 - But I want you to consider that there is more to it than that – there a more things being considered, there is more taking place
- And how you and I respond is huge

Jacob, here in our text cries out “all things are against me”

- and notice God calls him Jacob

So what??? – his name had been changed from Jacob, deceiver, always taking things on in the flesh, to Israel – governed by God

- so why is God calling him by his old name
 - Because that is what Jacob is behaving like

Instead of being like Israel – I know all things work together for good, to those who love God

- may we face our circumstances not with a Jacob mentality – all things are against me, guess God doesn't love me, I'm giving up, I'm quitting
 - But instead lets face our trials with an Israel mentality
- God you are in charge, I know You love me, I don't understand everything, But this I know..
 - So I am going to continue to let You lead, guide my life – You, the one who loves me enough to die in my place!!!!