

Genesis: God and Man

Their Hearts Failed Them

Genesis 42:25-38

Previously:

- Joseph had two dreams (sheaves of wheat; sun, moon stars)
 - Brothers hated him
 - Plot to kill him, saved by Reuben. Sold by Judah.
 - Potiphar, Prison, Pharaoh
 - Years of Plenty, Years of Famine
 - Joseph gets married, a part of the Egyptian culture now. Two sons, Ephraim and Manassah
- Manasseh** = "causing to forget" - For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house.
- Ephraim** = "double ash-heap: I shall be doubly fruitful" For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."
- Famine is severe, brothers standing around and Jacob tells them to go to Egypt
 - They meet Joseph, bow to him, but don't recognize him. But he does them.
 - Put in prison three days, Simeon made to stay to test them. They are to come back with Benjamin

Does your life make sense right now?

Does it feel like your past has caught up to you?

Exo 20:5-6 NKJV - you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, [am] a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth [generations] of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

You don't have to pay for generational sin. Sin of your parents or ancestors. What they did, THEY did. You might be living in the consequence of it or in a sense have a genetic disposition towards something...but once you come to Christ, you are FREE of any and all of it.

Do you feel like there is no right answer? No matter what you do it's wrong and every decision is a lesser of two evils?

Know that God is a God of mercy and grace and truth. He will set you free.

42:25-26

1. Fill all of their sacks with grain
2. Give them their money back. Thus the grain was free.
3. Give them food and anything else they needed for the journey (gas money, tolls, food, new shoes?)

Deu 29:5 NKJV - "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet."

I'm sure this isn't what Joseph did for everyone coming to look for grain.
I wonder what the people under him thought

They loaded their donkeys but didn't know about the money yet.

I wonder what they thought about the provisions for their journey?

Did it not seem odd to them that any of this was happening? I know they thought it was because their past sin was catching up to them. But why now?

I wonder if any of them prayed? And I wonder if any of them had what God would have showed them?

Sometimes spiritual confusion and blindness is simply because we haven't turned to God yet. Some sin, some past guilt, some shame, some debt is clouding our vision and causing us to make even more bad, poor, or simply misguided decisions.

Thinking i needed to make up for past sin

[utmost chambers devo 9/14]

:27-28

They got to an encampment, a place to stop perhaps for the night and wanted to feed his animal.

You've been travelling all day, hot, you're tired, just getting to the hotel. You are setting up a few things for the night, you pop the trunk and there, on top of your luggage, is the money.

and get the grain out to feed your donkey...you open the sack...
And there, sitting on top, shiny and large, perhaps a few grains covering it...is your money.

Would your heart not freeze? Would you not panic, especially after all that happened?
The man who has your brother, a powerful man in Egypt, who has accused you of being a spy, now, in your mind, hasn't been paid by you.

Are you being set up? Was it a mistake?

It seems this brother didn't even touch the money. He gets his brothers and points to it, "MY MONEY HAS BEEN RESTORED. THERE IT IS, IN MY SACK!"

Restored - bring back, repaired, turn, come back - "of human relations"

Joseph was trying to restore a relationship with his brothers.
But he wasn't the one that owed them. They owed HIM.

Mercy - not getting what you deserve, punishment
Grace - getting what you don't deserve, gifts

Joseph, like the LORD, was pursuing his brothers, wanting to bless them, loving them. He didn't want them to starve and he didn't want them to pay for the food either. He wanted to provide for them.

Rom 5:6, 8 NKJV - For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ... But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1Jo 4:19 NKJV - We love Him because He first loved us.

Luk 16:9 NKJV - "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.

We owed Jesus more than everything...and He died for us. He loved us. He reached out to us first to make amends.

When we're wronged, is this our attitude? I'm going to say no. Especially with family.
But it should be.

But this will only happen if we've already forgiven them. If we love them, we'll seek peace. We'll seek restoration.

God wants to restore families. As believers, we need to seek the restoration of our families...no matter how destroyed, dysfunctional they are. No matter how hopeless it seems.

To lead them to Jesus and to have fixed relationships.

Mat 19:26 NKJV - But Jesus looked at [them] and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid,

inner man, mind, will, heart, understanding

inner part, midst

midst (of things)

heart (of man)

soul, heart (of man)

mind, knowledge, thinking, reflection, memory

inclination, resolution, determination (of will)

conscience

heart (of moral character)

as seat of appetites

as seat of emotions and passions

as seat of courage

to tremble, quake, move about, be afraid, be startled, be terrified

to tremble, quake (of a mountain)

to tremble (of people)

to be anxiously careful

to go or come trembling (with prep)

Realizing you're in trouble. You've got no way out. The fear and dread and panic they must have felt.

But it's interesting that this is how they're looking at it. Because they still haven't dealt with their sin and been restored they see it as something to be dreadfully frightened of.

I think this is why some people hate the cross, are afraid of God, the Bible, Christians and the church...because they don't know how to handle such a blessing, such truth.

That God, despite all that they are and have done, even if it was just in the past, would love them. Would want to bless them, be kind to them, and care for them.

In some ways for the brothers, it was another test - would they come back for their brother, and now, would they come back for their brother and be doubly-honest knowing that this man might throw THEM in jail now?

How honest have they become really - it's one thing to do something because you have to, another to do something even when you can get away with it.

What is this that God has done to us? It's interesting that they know that God is doing something. They think it is some curse, punishment for their sin...but in reality, it's meant to be a blessing to get them to fully repent and be restored.

Rom 2:4 NKJV - Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

A lot of times, God will be good to us in order to get us to repent...even if he allows hard things to happen to us, it is out of his very goodness wanting us to repent and not to face eternal judgment.

They still have more journeying to do... I'll bet it was silent, scared, full of anxiety, sweating, worry, maybe even arguing, panic...**no rest.**

:29-34

They went back to daddy...in a way, I wonder if they regressed some...that they're being brought back to a time when they were younger and needed him to solve their problems...

They've grown up, but in their heart, they're still those young boys, scared, guilty - in need of their father to get them out of their trouble.

Oh if they only confessed way back when...

They claimed to be honest men...they think they've become honest men, despite the huge lie of their younger years.

Pro 20:6 NKJV - Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, But who can find a faithful man?

They tell Jacob all that happened in Egypt. They're being honest with him now. When they were away as younger men they fabricated stories.

I hope my children never feel they have to lie to me. I hope and pray they can and will always be honest with me and that I will handle their honesty appropriately.

:35

The rest hadn't opened their sacks... I wonder if they had been too afraid to look? Not wanting to know then.

Ever get a piece of mail and not want to open it? An email and not want to read it? Afraid of what it might say or be?

A bill? A rejection letter? Bad news? Something you just don't want to deal with right now as you've got so many other things going on?

The returned money might have settled to the bottom in travelling, the lighter grain covering it up.

Talk about a prize at the bottom of the cereal box!

But none of them was happy to find it...probably one by one...wait, you have your money? They scramble and open their sack and plop, out comes their money.

When they and their father saw it...they were afraid

to fear, revere, be afraid

to fear, be afraid

to stand in awe of, be awed

to fear, reverence, honour, respect

to be fearful, be dreadful, be feared

to cause astonishment and awe, be held in awe

to inspire reverence or godly fear or awe

(Piel) **to make afraid, terrify**

I get the sense that they were afraid, anxious, and more before...but now, being home, the whole family seeing it and that EVERYONE had their money back, the fear was now complete terror and awe. There might have been a way out of it before, but not now. They are all potentially accountable in the ruler of the land's eyes.

Joseph's dreams...his brothers would bow down, and his father and mother.

:36-38

Jacob says "you have bereaved me"

to be bereaved, make childless, miscarry

That he lost one son years ago, now he's losing two more...all because of his sons and what they do.

Snatched away, taken away

The feeling of losing a child because of someone else, I cannot comprehend in this way.

I think a lot of the decisions we're making in this country, some of which, perhaps because of the loss of children or the fear of losing them, have their judgment severely clouded. Their vision distorted...Like Joseph's brothers, we're interpreting what's happening all wrong.

We're thinking the problem is one thing when it's really another. We're thinking the solution is one thing but it's completely different altogether.

We're thinking the problem is physical, when it's truly spiritual.

Luk 21:25-28 NKJV - "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

But look up. We, as believers have hope, even in these darkest of days - and they're only going to get darker.

And like Reuben, we propose awful solutions

I get Reuben's resolve and that he fully intends to get them all back. That he's finally taking responsibility as the eldest brother and is not going to let anything happen to them.

But what really is in his power to do against the 2nd in charge of all of Egypt?
And is he not truly overcompensating for his guilt? For his past sin?

Mat 5:37 NKJV - "But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."

We need to be careful what we promise to do, what we pledge to sacrifice, especially to God. It may not be required. Simple obedience and repentance and a simple yes or no might be all it takes. We don't need to "swear on our mother's grave" sort of thin with Him, or others, as believers.

What would Reuben's sons think here? How would that affect their relationship with their dad?

Dad trust me, put him in my hands and I will bring him back to you...trust me father.

I'll bet Reuben wishes Joseph had been in his hands and not sold...he tried to get him in his hands out of the pit, but it was too late.

Jacob says no...Joseph is dead, there are no others from Rachel. He doesn't have any other siblings. I'm not going to sacrifice him here. There is no hope. If you killed him, I couldn't take it. I guess Jacob could deal with losing Simeon...

still more favoritism...undoubtedly linked to his sorrow of losing Rachel and Joseph. He's now clinging too tightly to Benjamin (I wonder if Benjamin was ever allowed to leave the house?)

Learning to let my kids go a bit...because I don't want to lose them and try to do all I can to not let that happen.

What are we holding too tightly on to?

What are we afraid of happening or not happening right now?

Are we misinterpreting what's happening because of some past sin, guilt, etc?

What is God trying to show us, minister to us? Because He is assuredly trying to minister to us.

Who must we pray for and maybe even try to make amends with, even if we weren't the wrongdoer?

What the brothers and Jacob should have prayed, if they didn't, "**Help us, oh Lord.**"