

"Open Wounds"

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH: GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY IN OUR SUFFERING | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

GENESIS 42:1-44:34 | MARCH 10/11, 2018

*"As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them."
(Genesis 42:7)*

First Cut: Recognizing Wrong Ways (42:1-38)

The first journey to Egypt and bowing to the ground (42:5-6)

Reuben and the brothers' recognition (42:21-23)

Joseph weeps the first time (42:24)

Second Cut: Taking Ownership of Our Wrong Ways (43:1-34)

Judah's ownership (43:8-10)

The second journey to Egypt and bowing to the ground (43:15, 26)

Joseph weeps the second time (43:30)

Third Cut: Facing Our Pain and the Pain We Have Caused (44:1-34)

Joseph's intentional snare (44:1-13)

The return journey to Egypt and bowing to the ground (44:14-15)

Judah's transformation and the selfless speech (44:16-34)

The Severe Mercies of God

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you faced into a difficult situation or relationship in your life? How did you manage to face it? What worked well and what didn't?
2. Continuing our series "The Life of Joseph" we will study three chapters, Genesis 42-44. After beginning with prayer, read chapter 42 aloud. Summarize the action of this passage in your own words.
3. Chapter 42 is an intricate interplay of 'knowing' and 'not knowing.' While Joseph recognizes his brothers, Joseph is not recognizable to his brothers (42:8). Their act of bowing down ironically becomes a fulfillment of his earlier dreams. Why do you think Joseph hides his identity at this point in the story?
4. What causes Joseph to weep in verse 24? Why do you think this is?
5. The brothers leave Simeon in prison and return to their father with serious news. Read chapter 43 aloud and summarize the activity there in your own words.
6. Judah's speech to Jacob (43:3-10) foretells a change that is happening in him that contrasts sharply with his role in selling off Joseph (37:26-28). What sort of change do you begin to see here in Judah?
7. What causes Joseph to weep in 43:30? Why do you think this is significant?
8. Now continue with the story by reading Genesis 44 aloud, summarizing it in your own words.
9. What is the situation that brings the brothers back to Joseph in Egypt (44:1-13)?
10. Why do you think Joseph might have done this to his brothers?
11. Judah's speech (44:16-34) is the longest in the book of Genesis. In what ways do you notice a change in Judah, and perhaps in the brothers, through this speech?
12. Reconciliation of relationship is sometimes compared to a bridge by which people walk in trust toward one another over a chasm. Before a bridge has been built, the chasm must be recognized and named. Have you ever experienced reconciliation in the face of deep rifts in relationship? What sort of hard things have been necessary to restore relationship?
13. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you are on your own, write it down and pray about it. If you are in a small group, take time to discuss this with one another before praying together.

TAKE IT FURTHER:

- Continue the daily devotional for this series: josephdevotional.wordpress.com.
- Read the Apostle Paul's words in Colossians 3:12-14. Journal on your own or talk with a good friend about these verses. Consider memorizing them.
- Spend some time reflecting on relationships in your life. Are there any relationships that need healing? What would it look like for you to live out Paul's words in your relationships?