

Dreamer: The Life of Joseph A Study in Genesis 37-50

The Return to Egypt
Genesis 43:1-34
July 18, 2021

And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!"
- Genesis 43:29

I. SELF-PITY AND STAGNATION

- Jacob's self-pity has wasted valuable time. Although understandable at times, it is often a time-waster for us as well (Gen. 42:36, 43:6).
- When Jacob puts aside his fear and self-pity, progress finally begins (Gen. 43:11-14).
- Judah is the voice of reason. He speaks what is real, and offers his pledge to his father. His counsel wins the day (Gen. 43:3-10).
- Faith, hope, and realism are the biblical counters to self-pity and fear (Ezra 9:4-15; Col. 2:6-9; Heb. 11:1).

II. THE ROOT OF BITTERNESS

- Self-pity and self-assurance are roots that bear poisonous fruit (Deut. 29:16-21; Heb. 12:12-17).
- Joseph is moving beyond bitterness to peace (Gen. 42:24, 43:26-29).
- Joseph continues to test his brothers. Once again, their youngest brother receives the blessing. How will they respond? (Gen. 43:33-34; Ps. 73; Jer. 12:1-4)

III. THE PEACE OF GOD

- Both Joseph's steward and Joseph himself are not interested in stories of woe. They simply offer peace (Gen. 43:23, 27).
- It is good at appropriate times to pity others, but be careful of the trap that leads to self-pity (Mark 9:14-29; Acts 8:17-24).
- Honesty with God leads to genuine peace (Jer. 12:1-5; Phil. 4:4-9).

KNOW: When the bonds of age-old bitterness begin to break by the Spirit of God, the relief is overwhelming. Bitterness destroys both parties in its grips— but the party holding the grudge is destroyed more thoroughly. Self-pity is incredibly destructive as well.

DO: Get rid of bitterness and self-pity. Know the peace of God.

Suggested Reading:

Gospel Hope for Anxious Hearts: Trading Fear and Worry for the Peace of God by C.H. Spurgeon (Available in the LifePoint Library)

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read Genesis 43:1-34

1. What do you think Joseph is up to as he places more tests before his brothers?
2. Which of Joseph's brothers is rising to leadership? Why do you think that is?
3. How is self-pity hurting Jacob, Joseph's father?
4. How do you deal with self-pity in your own life?
5. What does peace with God look like for a person? What does it look like in your life when you sense it?
6. What steps can you/will you take to see to it that a "root of bitterness" does not develop in your own life?
7. Any other takeaways from this narrative for you?