

How Could This Happen to Me?

(Genesis 37-50)

Yearly Theme: *“Peace is...”*

Series Title: *“The Cost of Peace”*

September 12th, 2021

Something to think about:

The question this morning is this: Have you ever been hurt by someone close to you? How did you respond when that happened?

A follow-up question is: Has there ever been a time when hurt or betrayal by someone in your life drove you to something unexpectedly better?

Today, as we continue our series entitled, “The Cost of Peace,” we come to a story in the first book of the Bible called Genesis. This is a story about a young man by the name of Joseph who is grievously betrayed by his brothers when he was just a teenager, and it’s a story of great hardships, and blessings, throughout his young adulthood years. In addition, this is also a story of great forgiveness.

Before we get into the details of Joseph’s story today, the main takeaway from his life’s story is this:

Key Point: “Great offense is an opportunity for great forgiveness, and great forgiveness leads to great peace.”

One of the youngest in the family, Joseph grew up as his father’s favorite son. There was no hiding the favoritism, for the father, Jacob, even had a royal robe made especially for Joseph as a reflection of his special affection for him.¹ Of course, as it would, this left Joseph’s older brothers not merely annoyed, but angered and jealous. Adding insult to injury, Joseph even had two specific dreams that he relayed to his family that seemed to indicate that he would one day rule over them.

The first dream that Joseph had was of bundles of grain in a field. In the dream Joseph told his brothers that they were out in a field tying up bundles of grain. After they had tied the bundles, in his dream, all of his brothers’ bundles gathered near Joseph’s bundle and bowed down to it. Genesis 37 explains that Joseph’s brothers hated him all the more!²

In the second dream, Joseph explained that the sun, the moon, and all the stars came close and bowed down before him, indicating this time that not only his brothers, but also his parents, would be ruled by him.³

Not long after these incidents, Jacob sends Joseph out to check on his older brothers and see what they’re up to. It takes him about a 3-day journey to finally catch up to where they are, and when he does the brothers notice his arrival as he is still a long way off. Knowing that their father, Jacob, had sent their younger brother to check up on them made them even more incensed because of this seeming lack of trust. It also didn’t help matters that Joseph was the one sent to check up on them.⁴

This leads to two “Great Offenses” as well as “Great Forgiveness.” Let’s take a closer look:

- **Offense #1:**

Read: *Genesis 37:18-35*

- **Offense #2:**

Read: *Genesis 39:6-20*

- **Great Forgiveness:**

Read: *Genesis 45:1-15*

Something to take home:

What is the story of your life? Are there betrayals, rejections, wounds, and hurts along the way? How have you dealt with them? Have these things defined you, or have you learned to forgive and overcome these things in such a way as to see the hand of GOD molding you and making you stronger?

Have you allowed unforgiveness and bitterness to grow deep roots in your heart? Are your wounds what define you? Or, have you allowed GOD to heal those wounds, and rather than defining you, do they stand as reminders of GOD’s healing touch on your life? It’s important to remember, Jesus had wounds too. Those wounds didn’t define Him, but rather stood as a stark reminder of GOD’s providential care and love!

Nothing good can come from bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness. These are tools and traps of the enemy who seeks to steal, kill, and destroy you.⁵

Joseph learned that the only way to survive what the world throws at you (even the hurt by those closest to you), is to keep your eyes fixed on GOD the Father and to rise above the muck and the mire of this world. The only way we can do this is by trusting GOD and forgiving the way He forgives us.

Key Point: “Great offense is an opportunity for great forgiveness, and great forgiveness leads to great peace.”

¹ Genesis 37:3-4.

² Genesis 37:8

³ Genesis 37:9-11.

⁴ Genesis 37:12-17.

⁵ John 10:10.