

# The Joseph Experience – Changed, Blessed, and Wise 05

Intro: Change brought Joseph up to a higher place and opened him up to receive wisdom and greater blessings. We can expect that change will do the same for us.

Homework: Is anyone reading the chapters at home?

Last week we talked about reading 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 in different translations. Did anyone do that this past week? Do you feel like you have a better understanding of Biblical humility and where your life is going in Christ?

So far, we've seen Joseph's transformation from an Attitude City teenager to a man with a humble servant's heart. This week Joseph's brothers are going to show up to buy food. We're going to see if Joseph has really changed.

## Genesis 42 NKJV

**1When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" 2And he said, "Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may live and not die."**

This kind of makes me chuckle. How did his brothers not know there was grain in Egypt? Jacob was a little perturbed with them, "*Why do you look at one another?*" Maybe it sounds a little like Joseph's sassy mouth? Chip off the old block, maybe?

**3So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. 4But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin.... 6Now Joseph was governor over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth.**

In this moment, one of the prophetic dreams Joseph had back in Canaan was fulfilled and the second one was already underway. Their food bowed to Joseph's food, fulfilled. The other dream was an authority over the family. The brothers bowed, and what Joseph is about to do shows his authority over the entire family. We'll see that his father has to bow to his wishes as well.

**7Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them.**

Joseph sounds like he's taking a bit of revenge on his brothers. Makes us wonder, did he completely change? Is he justified?

Joseph goes on to call his brothers spies, because he remembered the dreams and then it seemed like he remembered the difficult time they gave him. He's trying to put them in the same prison he lived in, but this time as spies.

**10And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. 11We are all one man's sons; we are honest men; your servants are not spies."**

"*Your servants*," they are submitted to his authority!

After some back and forth, <sup>(13)</sup> **Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no more.**"

Still lying about Joseph being dead and right to his face this time.

**14But Joseph said to them, "It is as I spoke to you, saying, 'You are spies!' 15In this manner you shall be tested: ... you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. 16Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether there is any truth in you; or else, ... surely you are spies!" 17So he put them all together in prison three days.**

Joseph is not exacting revenge on his brothers, as most of us have been taught. We need to have supernatural wisdom to understand what's actually taking place here. Let's read a little farther first.

**18Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God:** He requested that one of the brothers stay back in the prison until they come back with the youngest brother to verify their story.

But Joseph *really* wants to see Benjamin.

**21Then they said to one another, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us."**

Now they start to have a change of heart, when the situation was turned back on them. **Joseph is giving them a prison experience, like he had, so they can do some soul searching and have a change of heart too!** While we might be interpreting this situation as Joseph being mean, taking the upper hand or even revenge, Joseph wanted to make *sure* their hearts were in the right place as well before he revealed that he was governor and basically ruled Egypt. They too were going to be even more wealthy and hold a place of honor in Egypt. **It wasn't just Joseph that had some attitude to break off, so did his brothers.** If you go back up to verse 13, "*and one is no more*," stop for a moment and think, none of his brother searched for him or went to see what became of him. They all collectively decided to treat him as dead, even though they knew he was not "*no more*." They never admitted guilt to each other or made things right before the Lord, and that point becomes more and more clear as we read on.

**22And Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not speak to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now required of us."** ‘

There is Reuben, first born, stepping up as the eldest, the leader of the brothers. He's correcting them. But it's interesting that they understood seed and harvest with their actions, just as Jacob did.

**23But they did not know that Joseph understood them, ... 24And he turned himself away from them and wept. Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.**

He wept, because he loved them, but he had wisdom from the Lord on how to handle their past sin. **None of them were innocent in this matter, and I think Joseph came to that realization in prison.** Simeon was the second born brother, the second child of Leah. We don't know, but it seems he would have taken Rueben instead, but he heard Rueben correcting them and realized he wasn't part of the plot to kill or sell him.

**25Then Joseph gave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to restore every man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. ... 27But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; ... 28So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, ... in my sack!" Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What is this that God has done to us?"**

Again, we see Joseph's provision for them and love for his brothers. Instead of the brothers recognizing Joseph or wondering why a family accused of spying just got blessed; their hearts were gripped with fear because of their sins against Joseph. **What we can learn from them; sin will keep you in fear.** That's the thing about fear, getting into fear will give you the wrong perspective!! It will make you think the worst. Not only did they not recognize their brother and miss thinking they were blessed, but they also took on such great fear that they blamed God! How crazy is that?

**29Then they went to Jacob their father ... and told him all that had happened ...**

Jacob, their father, is upset, because Joseph, the governor, wants Benjamin to return, and Simeon is in prison.

**37Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you."**

Reuben steps up again as a leader of the brothers. Remember in the first study we talked about ancient culture and the eldest brother was to carry on after this father; not the younger sons, like Joseph.

### Genesis 43 NKJV

**<sup>1</sup>Now the famine was severe in the land. <sup>2</sup>... they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, “Go back, buy us a little food.”**

The journey from the land of Canaan to Egypt was about 10 days, give or take a few days depending on donkeys breaking down, weather conditions, and time of year. Nowadays the walk would be about 8 days with modern roads, no animals, hotels and gas stations with beef jerky and water to refresh yourself.

**<sup>3</sup>But Judah spoke to him, saying, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’ ... <sup>8</sup>Then Judah said to ... his father, “Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, .... <sup>9</sup>I myself will be surety for him; .... If I do not bring him back to you ... then let me bear the blame forever. <sup>10</sup>For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time.”**

No one seems to be concerned about Simeon. But as for the rest of them, Joseph must have supplied them with quite a bit of grain to eat; the journey alone was about 20 days on the road. Notice Judah is now stepping up to take responsibility, when *he was the one who suggested they sell Joseph*. This tells us that Judah also had a change of heart; because Reuben already decided to accept blame and offered his two sons' lives as a promise.

Their father goes on to tell them to return, take gifts of local food, and take double the money along with their brother Benjamin.

**... and they stood before Joseph. <sup>16</sup>When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, “Take these men to my home, and slaughter an animal and make ready; for these men will dine with me at noon.” <sup>18</sup>Now the men were afraid because they were brought into Joseph’s house; and they said, “It is because of the money, which was returned in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may make a case against us and seize us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys.”**

Once again, *fear of their sinful life has gripped them*. When people live right before the Lord, they expect to be blessed and honored wherever they go. We experience the same thing! When you see red and blue lights in the rear-view mirror and you know you've been speeding, not stopping at stop signs, and cutting people off; the police stop you and you think, “*Oh great, wonder what I'm going to be accused of.*” Why? **Sin causes an expectation of accusation and punishment.** Now on the other hand, if you know you've been driving the speed limit and obeyed the laws; and then you see red and blue lights, your thoughts are, “*Wonder if my break light is out.*” When we were younger in school, some of us were called to the principal's office. On the way down, some of you were wondering which bad thing you were being called down for, and some of you were walking down there wondering if you forgot your lunch and your parents dropped it off. We understand this scenario better than we want to admit.

**<sup>19</sup>When they drew near to the steward of Joseph’s house, they talked with him ... the brothers, scared beyond reason, tell him what happened with the money. <sup>23</sup>But he said, “Peace be with you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to them.**

This steward said all wonderful things to indicate they were being blessed, “*God gave you the money back*” but we've read the story before, we know they're still scared out of their minds.

**<sup>24</sup>So the man brought the men into Joseph’s house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. <sup>25</sup>Then they made the present ready for Joseph ...**

Blessed, blessed, and blessed again... but fear from sin still caused them to still have a bad perception.

We'll pick up at verse 25 next week.

The **lesson from Joseph** that the Holy Spirit is highlighting to us this week is **handling old enemies**. It doesn't matter what wrong they have done to us; we're *supposed* to be in prayer towards them and loving them despite what they have done.

**Matthew 5:44** NKJV

**But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,**

Jesus set the standard of our behavior when we're mistreated:

Love your enemies: This means love them in Christ. Jesus died for them too. That doesn't mean you have to be their doormat, but it does mean that we aren't supposed to wage emotional wars in return. In short, if you need to call the police, call the police; but their actions against us still don't give us the right or excuse to step out of love. "*You don't know what they did to me...*" You don't know what the blood of Jesus did for you!

Bless those who curse you: This doesn't mean you should buy them a new car or pay their bills! If the Holy Spirit tells you to specifically do that fine, but that's not what this verse necessarily means. If you know someone is cursing, not cussing, you speak blessings over them, "*Lord, give them wisdom and understanding of what they're doing. Send them a laborer into their path to teach them.*" Don't join in cursing them back. If they tell you go to... the place prepared for satan... Don't be saying, "*You first!*"

Do good to those who hate you: Ask the Lord to give you wisdom in what good you can do. There are times when someone who is mean to you needs help and helping them out can turn the situation completely around.

Pray for those who spitefully use and persecute: This is difficult, I won't lie... but the more you do it, the easier it will get. Sometimes it's so difficult all you bring yourself to say is, "*God bless them.*" But keep at it, because *these moments when you act on the Word when your flesh wants to fight, you'll feel God's grace* come upon you and empower you.

Next two verses, **Matthew 5:45-46** NKJV

**<sup>45</sup>that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? ....**

Love is what is supposed to separate us from the world, showing the loving characteristic of our Father in our lives.

**John 13:35** NKJV

**By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."**

There is a good cause to choose God's way, because *when we have another encounter with these people, we'll be able to act according to the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit*, instead of feelings. In this way, we'll have the best outcome and avoid joining in their judgment from the Lord. **Someone can wrong you, and you could accidentally make it so that you're judged right along with them**. We don't ever want that to happen to us! The list of things we were told to do by Jesus is also a way to release our hearts from anger, rage, hatred, and keeping other negative feelings could give us something in common with satan.

**John 14:30** NKJV

**<sup>30</sup>I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.**

Jesus revealed that we could have something in common with satan and he would "*have something in you.*" Forgiving, forgetting, and pursuing peace will help ensure that you have nothing in common with satan. It is YOUR freedom!!

One more scripture on this matter, **2 Corinthians 6:14** NKJV

**Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?**

We often look at this scripture in the light of *don't have relationships with unbelievers*. If a Christian has a hate campaign against another person or is responding negatively, they're partaking of darkness, even if the other person is a Christian that's light having communion with darkness. **Responding how Jesus taught us keeps us free from having anything in common with devils and darkness.** This is incredibly important to stay clean and free when expecting God to answer your prayers.

Another **lesson** that we could learn from **the brothers** this week is, if you accidentally wronged someone, you *may* have to go back and make it right.

**2 Corinthians 5:10** NKJV

**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

Who said because we washed ourselves in the blood of Jesus and God forgave us, we don't owe someone else an apology? Who said we're exempt? Who said a Christian thief was permitted to steal, wash in the blood, and too bad for the person that suffered loss? **The reason we're told to leave our problems in His Hands, is because He will sort it out on judgement day, if the people refuse to fix it on Earth.** Nothing is just "*too bad for you!*" That's our peace as Christians. But on the flip side, we must make sure we don't have a list of apologies to issue on judgment day. You know why? It's not going to be a private event. It will be much more private here on Earth. If someone stole \$500, and "*got away with it,*" not in front of the Judgement Seat of Christ. **The sin might be washed in the blood, but there will be a note in your scroll, "Give Bob, your old friend from college, \$500 of your rewards."** Money on Earth comes and goes, but these rewards will be eternal that you won't want to give away. Believe it or not, it's so much easier to find and pay back that person you owed \$20 since 1991, than sort it out before the throne. Amen! **We want to live life, so The Judgement Seat of Christ is all about the rewards for us.** Believe it or not, there are middle-aged people who still carry around hurt from problems on the playground at school. An older woman that had grandchildren who were in their 20s was still telling stories about how her friends made her give them sugar for fudge, during the depression, and refused to let her have any of the fudge. It might be kinda funny to us, but 4 woman will have to stand before the judgment seat over sugar for fudge. Only God can reveal to us what wrongs need to be made right. Some of us already have names and situations stirring in our hearts. That's the Holy Spirit tapping on you!

I'm thankful for all the wisdom and revelational understanding that the Lord has been giving through Joseph's story. It's been an amazing blessing to me, seeing the Holy Spirit bring this story alive in a more relatable way. I'm thankful to everyone that came back, and I hope you'll be bac next week and you're feeling just as blessed as I am. Next week, we're going to go over the reuniting of the family. **Following** week, will be the final study, and there will be a lot revealing information about *why* God chose Joseph. You don't want to miss that!

This week's homework! It's going to be tough...

### Homework

- Spend some time with the Holy Spirit asking Him if you owe someone an apology, some money, or a replacement item. You may need to ask the Holy Spirit to help you find this person. He will work it out.
- Read **Genesis chapter 43**, because we skipped over parts of various verses.

(Prayer Points:

- Thank You Lord for giving us an opportunity to make a major change in our lives this coming week.
- If we have any wrongs that You want us to make right, please give us grace, strength, and boldness to handle the situation.

- If there is someone we must forgive, pray for, or bless please bring it to our attention.
- Lord, even though we know, please remind us that You're not angry with us. You want to position us to receive greater blessings on Earth and also in Heaven.
- We thank You in advance for reminding us when bad situations arise, it's easier to do the right thing in the moment than correct the problem later.
- Please help us to mature and give You the glory for all of our gifts and callings in life.

In Jesus name, Amen)