

WHEN WE DON'T UNDERSTAND

"Softening a Hard Heart"

Genesis 42:1-28

INTRODUCTION:

1. When Joseph was 17 his brothers sold him into slavery.
 - a) **37:1-4**
 - b) **37:12-28**

2. Joseph did no wrong to deserve such treatment from his brothers!!!
 - a) Joseph ends up being bought by Potiphar.
 - 1) **39:1-6**
 - b) Then he's wrongly accused of sexual assault and thrown in Jail and was there for 2 years.
 - c) Then in **Ch 40** Joseph interprets 2 Prisoners dreams.
 - 1) The Cupbearer (Good News)
 - 2) The Baker (Not so good)
 - d) Joseph then in **Chapter 41** Joseph is called to interpret Pharaoh's dreams.
 - e) Joseph is then elevated to #2 in all of Egypt.

3. Why is all this happening?? Because God is working out His providential plan for a Nation to bring him glory.
 - a) **Genesis 12:1-3**
 - b) **Genesis 15:13**

4. **While God was doing something good with Joseph's life in Egypt...**
 - a) Jacob was back in Canaan raising sheep and trying to keep his distance from his Canaanite neighbors.

5. **Genesis 41:56-57**
 - a) **Genesis 42:1-4a**
 - a) *"But Jacob did not send Benjamin."* Why?

6. **Galatians 4:4-7**

THE PROCESS GOD USES TO SOFTEN HARD HEARTS

I. GOD USES DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

1. The famine that God brought allowed Canaan to run out of food. Nobody could have seen this coming.
 - a) But God gave Pharaoh a dream.

- b) God gave Joseph the ability to interpret the dream.
- c) Pharaoh appointed Joseph to #2 in Egypt because of the famine.

2. **Joseph's gift was for the benefit of others.**

- a) **1 Corinthians 12:1-7; 11**

3. It is now Joseph who would prepare Egypt during the first 7 years of plenty.

- a) To survive the next 7 years of Famine.

4. **WATCH THIS:** God is about to unleash 7 years of **DIFFICULTY** (famine) NOT **DISCIPLINE** on Egypt.

5. **Genesis 42:1-5**

II. GOD USES CONFRONTATION WITH THE PAST

1. **Genesis 42:6-17**

- a) 3 times "*you are spies*"

2. **Vs 6a**

- a) "*Now Joseph was governor over the land*"
 - 1) Joseph was in charge of all sales transactions.

3. Joseph's brothers were ushered into his presence to buy food!!!

- a) **Vs 6b**

4. **Vs 7a**

5. **Vs 7b**

- a) "*and spoke roughly to them.*"

6. **Vs 8**

- a) **QUESTION:** Why didn't they recognize Joseph?

- 1) **HIS CLOTHES**

- a. **41:14, 39-42**

- 2) **HIS AGE**

- a. By now Joseph was 40.

- 3) **HIS SPEECH**

- a. **42:23**

- b. Egyptian was now his first language.

4) HIS AUTHORITY

- a. He was the 2nd most powerful man in the world

5) HIS ATTITUDE

- a. Vs 42:7
- b. Joseph literally made himself unrecognizable to them.

7. QUESTION: Why did Joseph conceal himself?

- a) 42:9, 14, 16-17

8. Vs 11, 12, 13

- a) "he is no more"

III. GOD USES THE REALITY OF CONSEQUENCES

1. Vs 16-20, (21) (Hard verse to read)

2. Galatians 6:7

3. Vs 22-24

4. Very Important: Before God could use them they had to come to grips with what they had done.

- a) Vs 22

- a) "So now there comes a reckoning for his blood"

5. 1 Corinthians 6:20

IV. GOD USES ACTS OF KINDNESS

1. Vs 25

2. Vs 26-28

CONCLUSION: TWO THOUGHTS

1. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REPENTANCE AND REGRET

- a) **Regret** can be you are just sorry you got caught.
- b) **Repentance** is a deep sorrow for past sin.
- c) 2 Corinthians 7:9

2. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FORGETTING AND FORGIVING

- a) **Forgiveness** is not **Forgetting**
- b) **Forgiveness** - means to hurl it away and not hold the offender accountable.
- c) **Forgetting** - is a willful disregard.