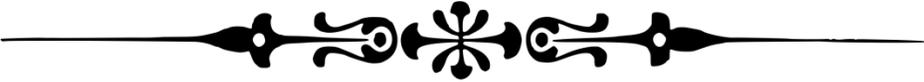


Read through the Bible



Genesis Week 5



Monday, November Eleventh

Back in August, a jury found Michael Drejka guilty of manslaughter for killing Markeis McGlockton. The incident centered on a disagreement involving a parking spot at a gas station in Clearwater. Drejka claimed that McGlockton had threatened him and that he feared for his life, so he shot McGlockton in self-defense. The incident received national attention after local and national activists questioned whether Drejka had a right to kill McGlockton based on the varying details of the situation. In today's passage, Jacob's sons react to an injustice upon their sister.

Read: Genesis 34:1-31

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How did Jacob and his sons react to the news of what had happened to Dinah? (see verses 5-7)

In their culture, Jacob's sons had a duty to protect their sister from harm. In this sense, their rage and anger were likely fueled not just by the incident itself, but also by their failure to keep Dinah safe.

- What proposal did Hamor make? (see verses 8-12) How did Jacob's sons counter this proposal? (see verses 13-17)
- What did Jacob's sons do to the Shechemites? (see verses 25-29)

Simeon and Levi were right to be upset that Shechem had violated their sister, but their actions to murder the Shechemites in return set a dangerous precedent for dealing with conflict. Jacob would later rebuke them for their sinful actions in Genesis 49 (one of next week's readings).

- What concern did Jacob have? (see verse 30) How did Jacob's sons respond? (see verse 31)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

When someone you love is harmed, how do you usually react? How do you typically go about seeking justice and / or resolution?

Tuesday, November Twelfth

Remember this song by John Denver? *Country roads, take me home, To the place I belong, West Virginia, mountain mama, Take me home, country roads* (this song will likely be stuck in your head now for the rest of the day...you're welcome!). In today's passage, Jacob takes the country roads home to see his father one last time.

Read: Genesis 35:1 - 36:43

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Where did God want Jacob and his household to go? (see 35:1 and look back at 28:19)
- How did Jacob respond to God at Bethel? (see 35:14)

What exactly was a drink offering? Throughout the Bible, the drink offering consisted of pouring out wine onto the altar of God as a sacrifice (see Exodus 29:40-41, Leviticus 23:13, and Numbers 15:5-7). In the New Testament, Paul used the drink offering as an analogy to describe how he had poured out his life before God in ministry (see Philippians 2:17 and 2 Timothy 4:6).

- How was Isaac buried? (see 35:29)

It was a fitting tribute to Isaac that his two sons had come together to bury their father after years of being at odds with one another.

- Who was Esau the father of? (see 36:9)

Esau became the father of the Edomites, a group who is mentioned approximately 130 times throughout the Bible. The Edomites had many interactions with the Israelites throughout their history. These interactions are recorded in the books of Numbers, 1 and 2 Samuel, 2 Kings, and Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

In today's passage, Jacob was reminded of God's promises for him and his descendants. Take some time today to thank God for the many ways that He reminds you of His promises for you in Jesus.

Wednesday, November Thirteenth

In *The Lion King*, Mufasa serves as the top lion of the pride lands and the leader of the African kingdom. He is liked, respected, and revered. However, Mufasa's brother, Scar, has no real role in the kingdom and often finds himself jealous of his brother. If you've seen the movie, you know just how far Scar is willing to go to upstage Mufasa. In today's passage, the jealousy of Joseph's brothers brings about dire consequences for the "favorite" son.

Read: Genesis 37:1-36

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How did Jacob view Joseph in comparison to his other brothers? (see verse 3)
- What was the main message in both of Joseph's dreams? (see verses 5-11)

If you were Joseph and you had these dreams, would you tell your brothers about them? For some reason, Joseph felt the need to tell them something they clearly did not want to hear: one day, they would bow down to him. Whether it was out of pride or simply a lack of tact, Joseph did not seem to realize that telling his brothers about these dreams would only make things worse for him...

- How did Reuben's plan for Joseph differ from the rest of his brothers? (see verses 19-21)

As the oldest brother of the twelve, Reuben likely felt a responsibility to watch over his younger Joseph and see that he was kept safe. Verses 29-30 shows us how hopeless Reuben felt once he realized that his brothers had sold Joseph into slavery.

- How did Jacob's sons trick their father? (see verses 31-33)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Jealousy often emboldens us to say and do things that we otherwise wouldn't normally say and do. Take some time today to pray against feelings of jealousy toward others.

Thursday, November Fourteenth

One of the most popular types of stories in our culture today is the story of somebody who prospers despite her or his challenging circumstances. For example, in 2010, Tim Harris, a young man with down syndrome, opened up his own restaurant. When customers walked through the door, Tim would always take the time to greet them with a hug and tell them that he loves them. Tim's story continues to inspire others with similar challenges. In today's passage, Joseph prospers despite his challenging circumstances.

Read: Genesis 38:1 - 39:23

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Who did Judah misjudge for a prostitute? (see 38:13-16)
- How was Tamar vindicated? (see 38:25-26)
- Why did Joseph prosper in Egypt? (see 39:2-6)
- How did Joseph respond to his master's wife's advances? (see 39:7-10)

Unlike his brother, Judah, who ended up sleeping with his daughter-in-law, Joseph remained a man of pure intentions. Even when his master's wife tried to seduce him multiple times, Joseph held strong and resisted her advances. It is ironic that Judah was not held accountable for his sin (38:25-26), while Joseph was held accountable for a sin he did not commit (39:19-20).

- Why did Joseph prosper in prison? (see 39:20-23)

In both his time as a slave and as a prisoner, the Bible tells us that Joseph continued to be prosperous because the LORD was with him. This will be an important point to remember as we continue on in the story of Joseph.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

In today's passage, God reassured Joseph that He was with him in the midst of difficult situations he faced. How does God reassure you that He is with you in the midst of difficult situations you face?

Friday, November Fifteenth

How many dreams have you had that you can remember? Researchers tell us that we forget 50% of our dreams within the first 5 minutes of waking up, and 90% within 10 minutes. You can also have up to 7 dreams in one night! With so many dreams forgotten, the dreams that often stay with us are the ones that are so extraordinary that they are simply hard to forget. In today's passage, two fellow prisoners describe their dreams to Joseph.

Read: Genesis 40:1-23

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How did Joseph come into contact with the chief cupbearer and the chief baker? (see verses 1-4)

What exactly was a cupbearer? Back then, the cupbearer was in charge of serving the king and his guests, notably by pouring the wine at meals. Sometimes, people would make attempts to poison the king, so it was usually the responsibility of the cupbearer to taste whatever the king desired to drink first to ensure it was poison free. If the cupbearer became ill or even died, then the king knew not to drink from the cup. A notable cupbearer was Nehemiah, who was the chief servant to the Persian king.

- According to Joseph, how did he have the ability to interpret dreams? (see verse 8)

This passage shows us how God can speak through dreams. However, it's important for us to remember that God does not speak in every dream. In this instance, Joseph was given a special ability by God to interpret dreams that were also given by God.

- What did Joseph ask the cupbearer to do? (see verses 14-15) Did the cupbearer do this? (see verse 23)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Think of a recent situation in which someone asked you for a favor. Did you follow through? Why or why not? If you did not follow through, how might you reconcile with that person?

Saturday, November Sixteenth

Throughout history, world leaders have come to power by one of two primary ways. For some, their journey is predictable: they are born into a wealthy family and are educated and groomed for leadership positions. For others, though, their journey to the top is rather remarkable: they come from a life of little means, and through a series of important decisions and hard work, they rise to the top and become unlikely leaders. In today's passage, Joseph's journey reflects the latter.

Read: Genesis 41:1-57

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What caused the chief cupbearer to remember Joseph? (see verses 8-13)
- How did Joseph explain his ability to interpret dreams? (see verses 15-16)
- What did Pharaoh's dream mean? (see verses 25-32)
- What did Joseph suggest that Pharaoh do to prepare for the famine? (see verses 33-36)
- What did Pharaoh decide to do? (see verses 39-45)

Consider, for a moment, the improbability of Joseph's journey. Years beforehand, he was sold into slavery by his brothers. As a slave, he became highly favored and rose in position. However, after being falsely accused of sexual misconduct, he was thrown into prison. Joseph's experiences in prison allowed him to gain an audience before Pharaoh, and because of his wisdom, he became the second most powerful person in all of Egypt. Joseph's journey demonstrates that his rise to power and prominence was no mere coincidence. Instead, Joseph succeeded because the LORD was with him every step of the way.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Take some time today to thank God for being with you throughout all of the experiences you have had in your life journey.

Sunday, November Seventeenth

One of the fun parts of high school reunions is that you get to see and catch up with people you haven't seen in quite some time. How are they doing? What are they up to? Do they have a family? How many children? Grandchildren? Great-grandchildren? Sometimes, though, high school reunions can be rather awkward, especially when someone comes up to you and you don't recognize the person! In today's passage, a group of unlikely visitors fail to recognize Joseph as they arrive in Egypt during the famine.

Read: Genesis 42:1-38

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How does verse 6 affirm the prediction in Genesis 37:5-9?

Long ago, Joseph told his brothers that one day they would bow down to him. Now, years later, in an unpredictable way, Joseph's brothers had done just that!

- How did Joseph's brothers make sense of the difficulty they were experiencing? (see verses 21-22)

After all these years, Joseph's brothers had carried guilt with them for what they had done to their brother. Coming before Joseph was now a perfect opportunity for reconciliation, but it would be up to Joseph to decide whether or not to reveal who he was to them. Would he tell them? We'll find out together...next week.

- What was Jacob concerned about? (see verses 36-38)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Going into next week's readings, Joseph has a decision to make: does he try and reconcile with his brothers or not? Consider a broken relationship in your own life. How might the Holy Spirit work through you to try and reconcile with that person?

Questions? Comments? Contact Pastor Chris at chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org or (727) 344-2684.