

Heal a Family – Build a Nation

Lesson #9 – Genesis 41:41-52

**Based on the sermons by Jim Johnson
Senior Pastor – Fellowship Bible Church**

Introduction: Last time we witnessed Joseph's remarkable journey from a prison cell to the palace of a ruler of Egypt. Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams landed him in a position of authority that God had prepared for him. However, there is a public visible side to Joseph's life and an unseen private side.

The Public Joseph is a successful man. V 41-49

Joseph was empowered by Pharaoh to carry out his tasks. Joseph, by God's sovereign plan was now second in command of the greatest nation of earth. Pharaoh's signet ring was given to Joseph as verification of this authority.

Joseph was publically honored. V 43-44

Joseph rode through the streets of Cairo in the "Air Force One" of his day, in the form of a chariot with every citizen required to bow their knee as Joseph passed. He was also renamed "Zaph-e-nath-pan-e-ah," which means "God speaks and lives."

Joseph was wedded. V 45

Joseph was further assimilated into Egyptian culture through his marriage to an Egyptian woman named Asenath, which means "she belongs to Neith" who was the god of Egypt. Joseph married into the highest circles of culture and power in Egypt.

Joseph was validated. V 46-49

Joseph had foreseen seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine in Egypt. Time proved that God had given Joseph the correct interpretation of Pharaoh's dream. Joseph's plan to store 20% of all the grain during the good years saved Egypt from starvation. After 13 years of imprisonment, he was publically validated.

Questions:

Has God ever put you into a "holding pattern" in your life when you wondered what He was doing?

What did you think of the idea of "waiting on the Lord" during that time interval?

What were some of the hardest aspects of waiting on the Lord when it seemed nothing was happening?

What did God do in your life during that time that prepared you for the place or position He had for you all along? What are you doing now to prepare for that day?

If you are still waiting on the Lord, what do you envision your dream job/mate/situation to look like when it finally comes to pass?

The Private Joseph. V 50-52

Seven years into his marriage, God gave Joseph and Asenath two sons.

His first born son was born and Joseph named him Manasseh, a Hebrew name meaning "God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household."

This son seemed to take some of the sting out of all the bad years. The private Joseph, stayed true to his Hebrew roots, and enjoyed a wonderful new son.

A second son was born to Joseph and Asenath, whom Joseph named Ephraim, a Hebrew name meaning "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

Joseph was prosperous and blessed in every way. The naming of his sons reflects the blessing of God on his life. So the private Joseph was very aware of his blessings and grateful for all of them.

Questions:

In what ways have you seen God bless you even during times of trial and suffering?

What part does staying close to our Biblical roots play while we wait on the Lord?

Does being successful and having it all mean that we are free from all concern?

Reflecting on Joseph's private life.

Even in this time of blessing for Joseph, we can see from the names of his two sons that he is in a land he did not choose. We can see his life has not been altogether a trouble free existence. The names of his sons would be a constant reminder that he had been betrayed and unfairly treated in the past. While the public Joseph was very successful, the private Joseph held vestiges and scars from his past. There were some things he either couldn't or wouldn't mask.

Lesson from Joseph's life:

We can't enjoy success when the family is broken, as Joseph's original family was. His relationship with his brothers was a painful memory, and his father's memory brought sadness.

We can find consolation from the Lord.

Questions:

How important is it to have supporting and encouraging friends around you when you do not have a family to fall back on?

How do we stay focused on the blessings of God as a hedge against being overwhelmed by sadness and spiritual blessings?

What part does attitude play in winning this very spiritual battle?

We can build bridges to our families.

Questions:

What part does prayer play in restoration of distant family members?

How should we pray in regard to our role in healing within a family?

What should we ask God to do regarding old family members who have wounded us?

*In what ways can we reach out to estranged family members to bring healing?
(Romans 12:18)*

Guard your own family.

Questions:

How can we better understand the needs of our own family members?

Do you feel you have a grip on the impact you are making on your family?

What practical-wholesome things are you doing to engage your spouse and children?

Do you have "no demands – quality time" with your children in their "space?"

Are you sharing your successes with your family, or is the pursuit of success keeping you from your family?

