

A Man With A Merciful Heart

“The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered.” (Genesis 39:2)

Who is Joseph? He is one of the sons of Jacob among twelve brothers. His Father Jacob loved him more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him. But, *“When his brothers saw that their Father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.” (Genesis 37:4)*

“Now his brothers have gone to graze their father’s flocks near Shechem, and Israel said to Joseph, “As you know your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem, come I am going to send you to them.” (Genesis 37: 12-13) But as His brothers have hatred against him, *“So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe—the richly ornamented robe he was wearing—and they took him and throw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty, there was no water in it. As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers, “What we will gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed. So when the Medianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.” (Genesis 37:23-28)* Joseph’s brothers after what they did, they inform their father Jacob that Joseph killed with ferocious animal, and his father mourned for him.

This is what the brother of Joseph did to him. But Joseph settled in Egypt. Although he passed through difficult times but the Lord was with him, supplying him and sustaining him in times of difficulties and needs. The Lord God lifted him up and he found favour in the sight of pharaoh, the king of Egypt, for God enabled him to explain to pharaoh the dream that pharaoh saw, the dream that speaks about the coming of the seven years of famine to Egypt and the surrounding countries. God also enabled Joseph with wisdom and provide him the solution to pass the seven years of famine. Pharaoh admired that and he said to Joseph *“I am Pharaoh, but without your word, no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.” (Genesis 41:44)*

Many years later while Joseph became a great man in Egypt a severe famine happened, *“And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world.” (Genesis 41: 57)* So, *“When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, ‘Why do you just keep looking at each other?’ He continued, ‘I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die.’” (Genesis 42:1-2)* When Joseph brothers went down to Egypt they met Joseph; he recognized them, but they did not recognize him. At the beginning he treated them harshly accusing them that they are spying the country. He put them in embarrassing and stressful situations. They were even convicted that they are in this trouble because of what they have done to their brother. *“They said to one another, “Surely we are being*

punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life but we would not listen; that’s why this distress come upon us.” (Genesis 42:21) But up to now they did not recognize him as Joseph their brother. Finally as they were pleading with him to help them and sent them back to their father, Jacob at that moment Joseph revealed to them himself as we read. *“Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, “Have everyone leave my presence!” So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh’s household heard about it. Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still living?” But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence. Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me.” When they had done so, he said, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there had been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then it was not you who sent me here but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. Now hurry back to my father and say to him. This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of Egypt. Come down to me; don’t delay. You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.” (Genesis 45:1-11)*

from the above real story we can have many lessons: -

- 1) God’s purpose prevails:** Joseph recognizes that inspite of the painful history and the events that he passed through, it is still God who had sent him there to save lives. In the same way the Lord God sent his Son Jesus Christ to save us; Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead on the third day to give us eternal life. God’s purpose for us is to receive Jesus as our personal Saviour and Lord and be saved, and to pass the message of salvation to others. We are here on earth to fulfill God’s will and purpose.
- 2) Forgiveness:** Inspite of all what Joseph received from his brothers, finally he was able to forgive them as the word of God teaches us, *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:21)* The Lord Jesus forgave those who crucified Him when He prayed for them, *“Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.”*
- 3) Focusing on the Lord and trusting Him:** Joseph with his forgiving heart, he trusted the Lord. And he focus his eyes on Him, not on any human being, not on trials and not on enemies; he built his trust on God who made him an over comer over hard situations.

My dear and beloved: It is a good lesson from the life of Joseph, a man with a merciful and forgiving heart; it teaches us that God is in control over everything in our lives. We should not be worry, upset or tempted to do evil, even when things go wrong. Remember always, God had a purpose, as we agree to pray.

My prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died for my sins on the cross to give me eternal life. Lord, I commit my life into your hand; increase my trust and my faith in you that you are in control and in charge of every aspect of my life. Thank you Lord, this is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.*