

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Second Quarter 2022: *Genesis*

### Lesson 12 “Joseph, Prince of Egypt”

#### Read for this week’s study

Genesis 41:37–46; 1 Kings 3:12; Genesis 42; Romans 5:7–11; Genesis 43; Genesis 44, Genesis 45.

#### Memory Text

“And Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt’” (Genesis 41:41, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Joseph’s Rise to Power
- III. Joseph Confronts His Brothers
- IV. Joseph and Benjamin
- V. The Divination Cup
- VI. “ ‘I am Joseph, Your Brother’ ”
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. This second lesson on Joseph covers his rise to power and dealing with his brothers (chs. 41-45). What is the purpose of this part of the story? Obviously, we all love ‘rags to riches’ stories with happy endings – but is that the reason Genesis includes it? Pharaoh is so impressed by Joseph’s wisdom and ability that he puts him in charge of the whole land of Egypt (Sunday’s lesson). He puts his ring and robe on Joseph and has him driven around in a chariot with runners saying, “Make way! Honor the man!” (Which Joseph does not refuse!) He is now the Number Two person in Egypt, exalted and a hero. But is this his most heroic chapter? If not, which part of the Joseph story is his most heroic?
2. In Monday’s lesson (ch. 42) Joseph confronts his brothers. All of Jacob’s sons, except Benjamin (why?) go to Egypt. They all appear before Joseph to beg for food. It’s been twenty years since they sold their brother into slavery, so they have no idea that this exalted, Number Two man, a powerful official in Egypt is their little brother

Joseph. They don't know, and they bow down before him, their faces on the ground. Remember the dream from chapter 37?

3. Joseph recognizes them. He is overcome and weeps, but he does not tell them who he is. He accuses them of being spies. They answer, "We are not spies from another nation, we are 'honest men', a normal nomadic family." Then he tells them to go home and get their little brother (who is 32 years old with 10 sons [46:21]) and bring him back to him as proof that they are telling the truth. Why does Joseph do this? Why not just lay all his cards on the table? His brothers are desperate. He's got the upper hand now, and they will do whatever he wants. Why prolong the story? Is he trying to keep them in suspense? Is he being a little passive-aggressive? Or is something else going on? If so, what is it?
4. In the initial story (ch. 37), when his brothers betray him the writer does not record any of Joseph's words. We do not know if Joseph said anything. Now, twenty years later, his brothers can still hear the voice of their little brother, begging for his life. Interestingly, the brothers see the whole experience as God's punishment for what they did to Joseph (see 42:21-24). What can we learn from their experience?
5. What is the purpose of Benjamin's special treatment? (Tuesday & Wednesday's lessons) How do the brothers (43:18) and Joseph's chief steward (43:23-24) assess the reality? Why does Joseph "supersize" Benjamin's portions during a famine when food is so precious? What's the purpose of the charade with the divination cup? Joseph sent the brothers away with a lot of food and money. He showed them great generosity, but then he had them brought back because he's missing a treasure—his silver cup.
6. Here are the brothers, one more time, with their younger brother whom their father loves, and they have the opportunity to be rid of him. This time, they do not even have to do anything wrong. They do not have to kill him or sell him into slavery. As far as they know, it's Benjamin's own fault. They don't need to lift a finger, and the favorite is gone once more. What is Judah's response (44:30-34)? What is the significance of his response?
7. Why does Joseph twice need to say to his brothers, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt (45:3-5)? (Thursday's lesson) Why is it significant that the text says: "Afterward, his brothers talked with him" (45:15 cf. 50:21)?
8. What is the distinction between forgiving and reconciling? What can be done alone or with somebody else, and what requires a miracle of rebuilding trust, rebuilding community?
9. Vision is the ability to recognize God's power, God's presence, and God's plan despite the obstacles. Where is our focus right now? Is it possible we are so focused on the circumstances of life that we are unable to see or think about anything else? Is it possible to become so overwhelmed with the circumstances in life that we are not able to hear God say, "Come on, look at me. Don't focus on the problem. Look at me." "And the Lord was with Joseph." (39:21) God is with us as well!

## Further Study with Ellen White

Though enemies may thrust them into prison, yet dungeon walls cannot cut off the communication between their souls and Christ. One who sees their every weakness, who is acquainted with every trial, is above all earthly powers; and angels will come to them in lonely cells, bringing light and peace from heaven. {GC 627.1}

From the beginning God has wrought through His people to bring blessing to the world. To the ancient Egyptian nation God made Joseph a fountain of life. Through the integrity of Joseph the life of that whole people was preserved. Through Daniel God saved the life of all the wise men of Babylon. And these deliverances are as object lessons; they illustrate the spiritual blessings offered to the world through connection with the God whom Joseph and Daniel worshiped. {AA 13.2}

Every good thing of earth was placed here by the bountiful hand of God as an expression of His love to man. The poor are His, and the cause of religion is His. The gold and the silver are the Lord's, and He could rain them from heaven if He chose. But instead of this He has made man His steward, entrusting him with means, not to be hoarded, but to be used in benefiting others. He thus makes man the medium through which to distribute His blessings on earth. God planned the system of beneficence in order that man might become like his Creator, benevolent and unselfish in character, and finally be a partaker with Christ of the eternal, glorious reward. {9T 255.2}

God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God, develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like his Master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. So quickened is he by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness, that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. {GW 285.3}

God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him. {SC 43.2}

The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, requires a struggle; but the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness. {SC 43.3}

The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous one. Day by day God labors for man's sanctification, and man is to co-operate with Him, putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. He is to add grace to grace; and as he thus works on the

plan of addition, God works for him on the plan of multiplication. Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them. {AA 532.2}

The long night of gloom is trying, but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish, has been the reason of so long delay.—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 194. (1868) {Ev 694.2}

Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the Saviour's cross; for though they did not then understand all, they knew that the destruction of sin and Satan was forever made certain, that the redemption of man was assured, and that the universe was made eternally secure. Christ Himself fully comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, "It is finished." {DA 764.4}

That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. . . . The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. . . . The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. {ST, December 30, 1889 par. 4}

The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created, endowed with power to do the divine will. But the defection of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent, and yet it did not deter Him from carrying out His eternal purpose; for the Lord would establish His throne in righteousness. God knows the end from the beginning... Therefore redemption was not an afterthought . . . but an eternal purpose to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world but for the good of all the worlds which God has created. {AG 129.2}

God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. {DA 224.5}