

June 18th Readings

[GENESIS 37:1-38:30](#)

[MATTHEW 12:22-45](#)

[PSALM 16:1-11](#)

[PROVERBS 3:27-32](#)

Can One Person Make a Difference? Part 1

In our reading this week, the portion from the book of Genesis, we pretty much see the life of Joseph laid out for us. A life that we would say had some big ups and downs. One thing that has always stood out to me with Joseph was his ability to accept the situation and go forward. If anyone had a right to jump up and down and scream, "This is wrong, unfair, and unjust!" it was Joseph. I'm not saying he was thrilled about those times but he took those circumstances and the tasks given to him and did them to the best of his ability. In each occasion it says that the Lord was with him or blessed him. Have you ever stopped to think why? Could it be that his good actions and behavior was recognized by God and so rewarded? Could it be that Joseph, hundreds of years early, had that mindset described in Colossians 3:17, "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." Sometimes I catch myself saying, "That's not right" or "That's not fair" rather than just doing the task at hand, as though I'm doing it for God. What about you?

June 19th Readings

[GENESIS 39:1-41:16](#)

[MATTHEW 12:46-13:23](#)

[PSALM 17:1-15](#)

[PROVERBS 3:33-35](#)

Can One Person Make a Difference? Part 2

When we look at the covenant between God and Abraham, introduced in Genesis 12:1-3, we usually skip to the part in verse 3 "...And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." I think we are drawn to that part because we know it's a reference to Jesus. And that is certainly true. But there are many blessings that God is going to bestow on individuals as well as groups of people between the time that covenant was made and the time of Christ. In today's reading, Joseph experienced some fulfillment of that Abrahamic covenant at a time before Israel was in the land. Joseph, just one man, the Lord being with him, became successful which in turn caused his master to be blessed. But even during the difficult times, Joseph became a blessing to those around him. Ultimately, Joseph, and his relationship with God, caused Pharaoh to be blessed and eventually the nation of Egypt. So one person can make a difference. As Christians we should be a blessing to work with, to work for, or to work under. We should be a blessing just to be around. The blessing of Christ should be visible in us.

June 20th Readings

[GENESIS 41:17-42:17](#)

[MATTHEW 13:24-46](#)

[PSALM 18:1-15](#)

[PROVERBS 4:1-6](#)

David, in his psalms, often wrote with simple phrases. And yet those phrases had and continue to have deep meanings and vivid imagery. As in the 23rd Psalm. I can always picture the green grass and the still waters. The first three verses of Psalm 18 are no different. The Lord is my strength, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my shield, my salvation, my stronghold. I think you get the idea. David is describing a God who is ALL powerful and without limits. The word 'my' is a possessive term and I think David believed in the power of God with all his heart. We as Christians, need to remember that the God of David is also our God. Sometimes I wonder if we don't comprehend this or if we just put limits on a limitless God. Try reading those three verses as you start your day as though they were your words. Think about each descriptive word and how it holds true in your life if you own it. Our God is an Awesome God!

June 21st Readings

[GENESIS 42:18-43:34](#)

[MATTHEW 13:47-14:12](#)

[PSALM 18:16-36](#)

[PROVERBS 4:7-10](#)

Webster boils the word *wisdom* down to these three words: Knowledge, Insight, Judgment. There was a time when someone seeking wisdom or advice would look to the older members of their family, group, tribe, or even congregation. Mainly because they were well respected and considered to be wise through the lives they lived and the life lessons they had experienced. It doesn't seem to be that way anymore. Today, people seeking wisdom or advice most likely Google it. What the world passes off as wisdom is usually a little bit of knowledge and a lot of opinion and is in line with what that person wants you to believe, not the truth. Which brings to mind several old sayings: *A little but of knowledge is a dangerous thing*, *The trouble with opinion is everybody has one*, and *You can't all be right, but you can all be wrong*. So what do we do? Wise King Solomon talks about true wisdom and how to use it in Proverbs 4:7-10. He explains that wisdom and understanding go hand in hand. Let us seek the wisdom and the understanding that comes from God and His word for application to our lives.

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach and it will be given to him. James 1:5

June 22nd Readings

[GENESIS 44:1-45:28](#)

[MATTHEW 14:13-36](#)

[PSALM 18:37-50](#)

[PROVERBS 4:11-13](#)

Busted

Have you ever done something wrong or got in trouble, but because of the circumstances you thought no one else has to know about it, especially your parents? So in a way it's like you got away with it.

It was the last day of school before Christmas break and I was in my last class of the day in the 7th grade. I guess the excitement was too much because I and three others were told that we had gotten too loud and we had already been told to be quiet. Detention meant that I would not be able to ride the bus home and my mother would worry about where I was. But I really didn't want to tell my parents. So instead of saying anything, I said nothing. I thought about it everyday of that Christmas break. I kept thinking and hoping that the teacher didn't really mean what he said. Then came the first day back, and as the final class drew closer and closer I kept thinking, "Oh, please let him forget!" I sat through his whole class, paying very good attention of course, and he hadn't brought it up. Yes! I'd gotten away with it! But, as the final bell rang and we were getting up to leave, he pulls out a paper and calls out the four names and says, "Don't forget you have detention now." Needless to say, I had to make that dreaded phone call to Mom and explain why I was going to need someone to pick me up later.

My story is nothing in comparison with the account of Joseph and his brothers. After all, they wanted to kill Joseph, but settled for selling him to passing traders and then came up with the incredible lie to tell their father. Years had passed, then came the day in Genesis 45 that Joseph is alive and now we have to tell our father. Gasp! I used to be really hard on Joseph's brothers, not just for what they did to him, but more so that they would lie to their father and put him through so much heartache and pain. Now I stop and think, "Am I doing the same thing to my Heavenly Father? Is there sin in my life that I haven't faced or confessed that is causing our Father heartache and pain?"

There is a day coming when everything will be revealed.

Are you ready for that day to come?

[June 23rd Readings](#)

[GENESIS 46:1-47:31](#)

[MATTHEW 15:1-28](#)

[PSALM 19:1-14](#)

[PROVERBS 4:14-19](#)

In Psalm 19, David once again uses simple but deep-meaning words to describe God's creation and then God's word. In verses 1-6, David tells us that heaven and earth are a constant reminder that there is a God and creator. We are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)

He then gives us these beautiful descriptions of God's word and the results it should have on us.

Description

Result

Law of the Lord is perfect

Restores the soul

Testimony of the Lord is sure

Makes us wise

Precepts of the Lord are right

Makes heart rejoice

Commandment of the Lord is pure

Enlightens our eyes

We can have the word of God and know it, but unless we put it to use it will not have its intended results. In verse 11, he tells us there is great reward in keeping them. Let's make God's word a part of our lives so we, too, can say,

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight.

O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer!

June 24th Readings

[GENESIS 48:1-49:33](#)

[MATTHEW 15:29-16:12](#)

[PSALM 20:1-9](#)

[PROVERBS 4:20-27](#)

Back in the Saddle

This past week, I will have been at the children's home in Gallup, NM, with some of our youth group working to help improve the home and strengthen our relationships with the kids there. Four or five years ago, I started taking our kids on a hike at least once during the week we were there. There is a mesa across the highway from the home and it looks like a giant took a bite out of it in the middle. We soon found out that it was called 'the saddle'. So we get up early one morning and go. It started with just those who wanted to go, because most kids don't like getting up early. In between where we start and the saddle is a series of hills and valleys. During the hike there are times when you lose sight of the saddle and it is easy to lose your bearings. One year our small group had to backtrack when the route we thought was correct ended at a 15-foot dropoff. I learned as we reached each hilltop and could once again see our destination that there were times we had to make corrections to the path we were taking. I'm proud to say that last year our entire group of kids and Jason all made it to the saddle. Through encouraging words and helping hands we reached our goal.

Solomon in Proverbs 4:20-27 gives us encouraging words to help us in our journey through life.

We need to stay focused on Christ and our goal of heaven. And when we lose sight of that, and we all do from time to time, we need to refocus and adjust our course accordingly. We, as brothers and sisters, should be the encouraging voices and helping hands so that we can all reach that crown of life!