thrive
A HOPE WOMEN'S GATHERING

Persevering Faith: Lessons from the Life of Joseph

Lesson 8: Forgiven
Teacher: Jennifer Evans
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INTRODUCTION:

READING: Genesis 451-8 (NIV)

[1]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. [2] And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh’s household heard about it.

[3] 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.

[4] 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! [5] 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. [6] For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. [7] 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.”

TABLE STUDY:

1. Verse 2 says that Joseph “wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him.” What are some of the emotions Joseph might have been feeling at this moment?

2. What are some reasons why Joseph’s brothers would be “terrified at his presence”?

3. What is the first question Joseph asks his brothers? Why is this significant?

4. How does Joseph’s response reassure his brothers in verses 5-8?

TEACHING NOTES:

TABLE DISCUSSION:

1. Why do you think forgiveness is so hard?

2. Consider your own heart. Do you struggle more with being a forgiving person or with living as a forgiven person?

3. Talk about the statement: “God desires restoration more than retribution.” How do we see that play out in our relationship with him?

4. What are some ways we can move toward forgiveness in our own lives? Share some of your thoughts if you are willing.

5. What is your big takeaway from today’s lesson?

UNISON READING: Genesis 50:20

You planned something bad for me, but God produced something good from it.