



Forgetful and Fruitful

Genesis 41:50-52

Sooke Baptist Church
Sunday, September 8, 2024, 10am



REMEMBERING *God's* FAITHFULNESS

03:00

chat/question:
what do you do to remember?



Genesis 41:50-52

Joseph and Asenath had two sons born to them during the seven years of plenty.

Joseph named their first son, Manasseh, and their second son, Ephraim.

The names given to Joseph's sons were not Egyptian, but Hebrew. What this tells us is that Joseph had not forgotten who he was and where he had come from.

He was a great-grandson of Abraham.

He was in a covenant relationship with God; a covenant relationship that included his sons.

The name Manasseh sounds like the Hebrew verb ... forget.

Joseph explained why he had chosen that name:

“God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household.”

Joseph's brothers, because of their hatred for him, had inflicted pain upon Joseph and caused him to experience deep sorrow.

If it hadn't been for the sovereign intervention of God, his brothers would have killed him.

How incredible is the grace of God!

The theme of Joseph's life was not the troubles he had gone through, but the goodness of God.

The Goodness of God

This is who God is.

In Jesus Christ, he makes us forget our troubles... in the sense that our troubles no longer define nor shape us.

God who saves us, redeems our troubles so that they become the means by which his grace is poured into and out of our lives.

Through the prophet God said:

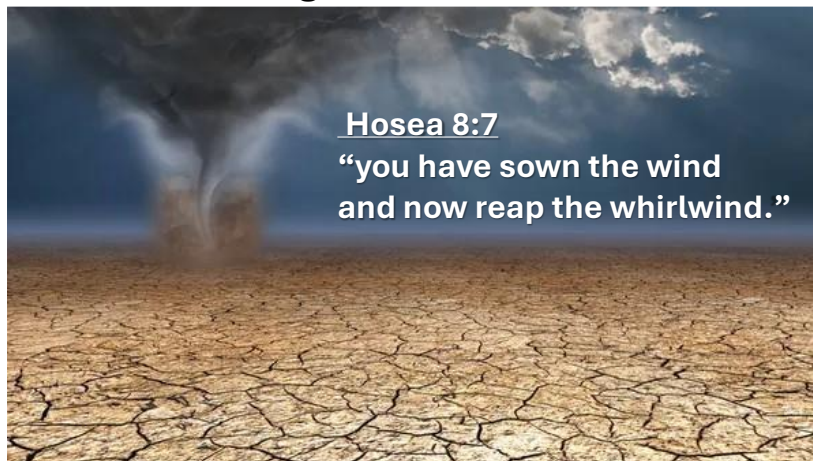


This is who God is.

In Christ alone... there is a door of hope... a way out of trouble.

The people who lived in the time of Hosea, because of their sin, were experiencing trouble similar to the trouble that came upon the nation of Israel, in the days of Achan.

God said to that generation...



But like the prophet Hosea who was told to reclaim and love his wayward wife, God said to that generation,
“I will not leave you in the place of trouble, nor see you destroyed. I will come to your rescue.”

This is who God is – he makes a door of hope in the place of trouble.

This is the testimony of Psalm 23.

“Even though I walk... through... the valley of the shadow of death... I will fear no evil... for you are with me.”

This is the testimony of Psalm 34.

Psalm 34:17-19
The righteous cry out,
and the Lord hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
The righteous person may have many troubles,
but the Lord delivers him from them all.

Just as the ear of a parent is attuned to the cry of their child, so is the ear of God attuned to the cry of his children.

Those whom God rescues, are given grace from heaven that makes them forget all their trouble.

And in response to the superabounding grace of God, and in confidence of our God who walks with us...

Philippians 3:13

**“...we forget what is behind
and strain toward what is ahead,
pressing on toward the goal to win the prize
for which God has called us heavenward
in Christ Jesus.”**

As we earlier sang, God meets us in our mourning, that is, in our grieving with a love that casts out fear. The LORD works in our waiting.

He is the lifter of the lowly.
He is the God who reaches down in endless grace.
He is sovereign over us.

This is who the LORD is.

I know that you are not here this morning to have your ears tickled. We have come to fellowship with the living God. And our God says to us... I am He who wipes away your tears; I am He who makes you forget all your troubles.

For some of you this is the truth God wants to grasp you with. He wants to change your orientation and give you a new perspective. He wants you to fix your eyes on Jesus, and not your troubles.

Joseph's second son was named Ephraim.
Ephraim sounds like the Hebrew word for... fruitful.

Up until his release from prison, Joseph's efforts had blessed Potiphar and had made the life of the prison warden easier... but had not brought any benefit to Joseph.

That all changed when God rescued him from prison and elevated him to the role of Vizier in Egypt.



God made Joseph's life... fruitful.

The sense of the word is broad.

In all aspects of his life, God made Joseph fruitful... in his marriage, in his family, in his work, and yes, in his own relationship with God.

And where ... did God make Joseph fruitful?

"...in the land of his suffering."

This is who God is.

He not only rescues, he redeems.

He turns the things intended for evil and uses them for good.

Not only did God make Joseph fruitful.

Joseph's faithfulness brought fruitfulness and blessing to his entire family.

Look at this summary statement made in Exodus 1.

Exodus 1:6
Now Joseph
and all his brothers
and all that generation died,
but the Israelites
were fruitful
and multiplied greatly
and became exceedingly numerous,
so that the land was filled with them.

We know that Joseph lived to be 110 years old.

We know he lived to see the third generation of Ephraim's children, his great-great grandchildren.

In the span of 70 years Joseph's extended family multiplied from 70 people to tens of thousands.

God, who had promised Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky, kept his word... using the life of Joseph to do so.

This is who God is.

The God of Joseph, in every generation, makes his people fruitful; he increases their numbers, he takes their little and makes it enough, he blesses and multiplies their efforts, he expands their influence.

And where does God do this?

In the land of our suffering.

Let me explain.

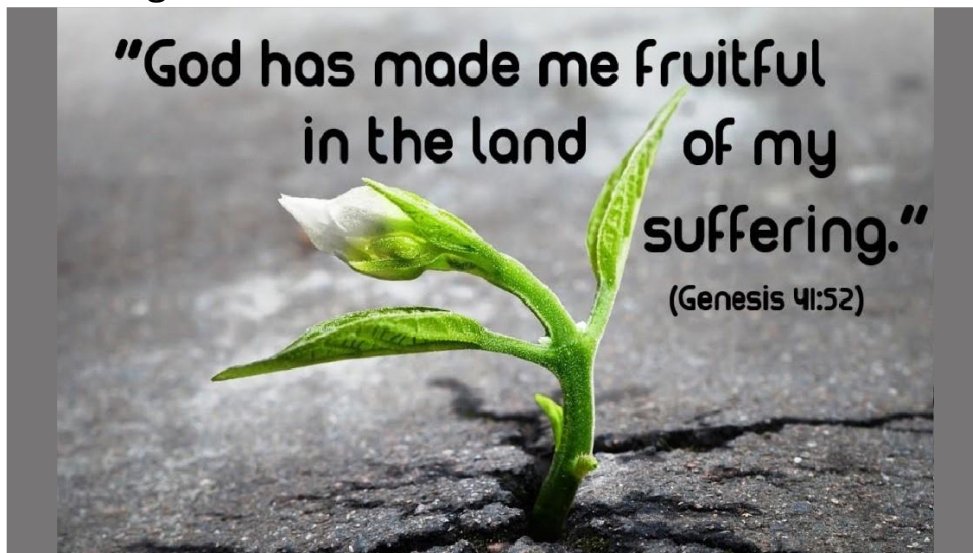
When God saves us, he does not immediately take us from this world... into his Father's home.
He leaves us hauntingly beautiful world that groans like a woman in labor.

He asks us to live in the midst of defeated but not yet banished evil.

Our bodies which bear the curse of sin, fail us,
but by the one sacrifice of Jesus we are made perfect forever...
even as God is active... to make us holy.

Hebrews 10:14

The God of Joseph is the God of new creation.
He produces fruit in the lives of his people in the land of their suffering.



It feels counter intuitive.

It seems impossible.

How can our God bring abundance through our lives... in a world of such spiritual barrenness?

God does so because of who he is.

It is not a hard thing for God to make his people fruitful in the land of their suffering.

For some of you this is the truth that God wants to grasp you with. He would remind you this morning that he will not waste your suffering... but will make you fruitful and useful for the glory of his person and his kingdom.

The LORD is good and his love endures forever.
With the LORD nothing is impossible.

He is able to make all grace abound to you,
so that having all sufficiency
in all things
at all times,
you may abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8