

Prayer Power Tower

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Preparation

With the death of Jacob, Joseph's brothers now fear retribution because of their past sins against Joseph. But Joseph has other words for them. You are about to begin an intentional hour of prayer. During your prayer time there are many requests and praises you may speak. As you speak to the Lord about your brothers and sisters, also remember to speak to Him regarding your own needs for forgiveness. Join with the psalmist as he begins his prayer of lament for ways sin has affected his life: *"Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night Your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. (Interlude) Finally, I confessed all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, 'I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.' And You forgave me! All my guilt is gone. (Interlude) Therefore, let all the godly pray to You while there is still time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment. For You are my hiding place; You protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. (Interlude) The LORD says, 'I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control.' Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the LORD. So rejoice in the LORD and be glad, all you who obey Him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!"* (Psalm 32 NLT) As the psalmist confesses, he is soon overwhelmed with a flood of forgiveness and the joy of the Lord. In your prayers, rejoice at God's unfailing love and be glad!

Scripture

Our study of Genesis now comes to a conclusion. But a genesis is a beginning, a birth. This is perhaps the way we should look at what we have learned these past months in our walk with God's people, His pioneers of the faith. As we look to these last verses (Genesis 50:15-26), notice the resolution of the family politics and the narrative of Joseph's charge to his brothers just prior to his own death. As you read of how old issues are addressed, and the

thoughts of the future, look for ways that God has given you to engage in reconciliation and hope.

- Through all that has transpired in Joseph's 110 years, he carried a faith that assured him that his brothers' plot was part of a greater plan (50:20). Be strengthened because this is a plan that was very plain to the Apostle Paul as well: *"in everything God works for the good of those who love Him..."* (Romans 8:28)
- When the brothers come to Joseph seeking forgiveness, Joseph's words (50:21) include "fear not" – words we are familiar with from the stories of Abraham (15:1) and Isaiah (Isaiah 41:10); at the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:10) and at His resurrection (Matthew 28:10). Fear not, for the Lord will guide and protect you as well.
- The narrative now concludes with the death of Joseph (Genesis 50:22-26). Joseph, given up for dead by his father and brothers so many years ago, has lived a long and full life. And like his father, Joseph is very much aware of God's promise, making his brothers swear to carry his bones to that land of promise – a vow fulfilled hundreds of years later by Moses (Exodus 13:19) and Joshua (Joshua 24:32). As you study God's Word, know that He will remain faithful to His promises, fulfilled in His own timing.

Adoration

The beginning, the genesis of God's people, shares with us many stories of His choosing those who remained faithful, even when they did not see the promise. We should sing praises to our good God, who sustains us. The following hymn is a fitting farewell song for Joseph. Will it serve you as well?

When I Have Finished My Pilgrimage Here

Alfred H. Ackley, 1909

*When I have finished my pilgrimage here,
When shall have vanquished temptation and fear,
As in the arms of His love I abide,
I shall be satisfied.*

Refrain: I shall be satisfied,
I shall be satisfied,
Sheltered above by His infinite love,
I shall be satisfied.

*When I am troubled by grief and despair,
Grace never failing awaits me up there;
Willing to trust Him whatever betide,
I shall be satisfied. **Refrain***

*When I have traveled the way with my Lord,
Counting the mileposts by faith in His Word,
Living and dying with Him by my side,
I shall be satisfied. **Refrain***

Confession

Throughout our study of the book of Genesis, we have read of many of the fathers of our faith who were given a very distinct call and promise by God. Of course God knew the heart of these whom He called, and as He assured them of His faithfulness, He worked to assure human faithfulness to Him. The promise given to Abraham was not fulfilled completely in his lifetime. Nor was the promise given to Jacob, carried on by Joseph. The patriarchs and their family were blessed because they continued to believe in a promise, even a promise they would never see fulfilled. The writers of the New Testament remember these pillars of the faith as well (e.g. Hebrews 11:1-22). At this time of confession, how is your faith in God's promises? Are you finding it hard to wait – or does the example of Abraham and his heirs sustain your patience? In our culture of instant gratification, of ready access to a world of information, we are inundated by the assumption that we are due an instant response to our every need and desire. As you come before the Holy God who has been faithful to His servants, confess any moments of your own unfaithfulness, and any lack of hope that He *will* keep His promises. Let the Holy Spirit of His faithfulness fill you with assurance.

When you have finished your confession, draw comfort and strength from this promise from God's eternal word:

O Israel, wait and watch for God – with God's arrival comes love,

With God's arrival comes generous redemption.

No doubt about it – He'll redeem Israel, buy back Israel from captivity to sin.

(Psalm 130:7-8 *The Message*)

Rejoice in the Good News: in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Thanksgiving

We often give thanks for the tangible, material things we have. But now is a good time to give thanks for those gifts from God that you cannot touch or feel – gifts of faith and promise and love.

- Give heartfelt thanks for the grace of saving faith in Christ!
- Thank God for the influences of ancestors, especially those who passed on a legacy of belief to you.
- Thank Him for the many ways in which we can see Him at work in our lives and the lives of those we love.
- Thank God for answered prayers.
- Give thanks for insights you have gained in our two-year study of Genesis, and further insights from our *roaming*.
- Give thanks that “*the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, [is] slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness*” (Exodus 34:6 NIV).

Supplication

The Bible assures us that “*The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results*” (James 5:16b NLT). Intimidated by the “righteous” part? Be encouraged by the truth that God gives to all believers the very righteousness of Christ, and pray confidently, even boldly – especially for those who stand shoulder to shoulder with you in this great ministry of prayer.

Daniel Adams, Kristen Agnew, Audrey and Bill Allen, Corinne Baker, Jon Baker, Cyndy Beech, Joyce Bett, Ed and Goldie Black, Betty Bowser, Barbara and David ‘Skip’ Byers, Jan Carr, Lisa Cook, Ray and Jane Cornelius, Jennifer and John Culp, Ed Daggit, Gina Brenda Dolan, Jane Dunmire, Ruth Dykstra Entwistle, Mickey Edmiston, Becky Elliott, Janice Good, Dorothy Gooden, Kathleen Graham, Dorothy Henderson, John and Marilyn Hicks, Joy Holland, Suzanne Howat, Gail Jablonovsky, Alberta Keener, Louise Keough, Joann Ketter, Dana Krepps, Michelle Kurtz, Donna Lewis, Jean Longnecker, Linda Longwell, Nancy MacRae, Rich Madsen, Don McAninch, Myrna Jane McCamey, Greg McElroy, Colleen McGaffic, Bob and Joanne Miller, Sandy Minor, Shirley Minshull, Jane and John Moser, Alan and Terry Northcott, Sean O'Brien, Edna Orange, Phyllis Osborne, Hazel Palmer, Joan Pashley, Jeannette Patterson, Nancy Rankin, Joanne Raymer, Andrea and Tod Reiser, Rachael Renick, Megan (Illsley) Sateia, Erin Scott, John Snow, Mary Jane Surrena, Charles Timmons, Beth Utsch, Betty Walters, Toni Walters, Alice Winger, Tami Witzke and Chris Yeakle.

- Please pray for those who labor with our Stewardship Team, as they lead us in this vital aspect of discipleship.
- Please pray for Pastor John and his whole family.
- Please pray that Jesus will let each of us know His presence in a powerful way as we come to His table in worship on Pentecost Sunday, May 23.
- Please pray as well for the confirmands who will be making a public profession of faith in Christ that day, and for their sponsors.
- Please pray that we will continue to grow in our efforts to truly be “*People helping people to know Jesus Christ.*”
- Please pray for Barry Almy and Betsy McCormick, former missionaries to Sudan, as they continue to serve God in vital ministries here in the United States.
- Please ask Christ to guide our session and trustees, and all of us as His church, as we weigh specific plans for a proposed elevator and new building entryway.
- Please ask God to continue to feed stomachs and touch lives through our series of community dinners.