

Foundations Devotional

• FOR THE WEEK OF SEPT 6 - SEPT 12 •

MONDAY // GENESIS 48-49

Joseph's story paints one big picture of God's faithfulness to His children and His promises. In these chapters, we see several examples of God's work through the lives of Jacob's family. Genesis 48 describes how Jacob adopted Manasseh and Ephraim, Joseph's Egyptian sons, into their family, which was the covenant family of God. When Jacob took them as his own sons (Gen. 48:5), he guaranteed that Joseph and his descendants would be a part of God's covenant community in the generations to come. Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection accomplished a similar purpose. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, anyone who believes in Jesus becomes an adopted child of God and heir to all His promises (Rom. 8:12-17).

TUESDAY // GENESIS 50-EXODUS 1

Fearing for their lives after Jacob's death, Joseph's brothers sought forgiveness and offered to be his slaves. Joseph then revealed his understanding that everything that had happened to him was part of God's larger plan (Gen. 50:20). In spite of all the hardships Joseph had suffered, God had positioned him perfectly to do the most good for the greatest number of people. Genesis 50:20 is one of the Bible's clearest affirmations of God's sovereignty—the fact that all things are under God's control and nothing happens apart from His plan and purpose. However, it wasn't long before that belief and the faithfulness of God's people was put to the test, as Exodus 1 describes. After Joseph died, the Israelites in Egypt were forced into slavery, and Pharaoh demanded all newborn baby boys be killed in order to keep the Israelite population from growing. Once again the stage was set for God to act on behalf of His people in order to bring glory to His name.

WEDNESDAY // EXODUS 2-3

Throughout the Bible, God calls individual people to play key roles in His redemptive plan, such as Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. God protected Moses following his birth because of the plans He had for Moses, and Moses grew up as an Egyptian prince. However, Moses' murderous action against an Egyptian forced him out of the land and into a new life in Midian, where he married and became a shepherd. It was there that Moses' famous "burning bush" encounter with God took place. When the Egyptian king died, the Israelites cried out to God for deliverance. He heard them and acted to save them. Using a burning bush to get Moses' attention, God called him to lead the Israelites out of slavery. At that time, God also revealed to Moses His name—Yahweh, "I AM WHO I AM." One of the great truths about God is that He does not change, a fact tied up in His very identity and name. This helps us know that just as God was faithful in the lives of His Old Testament servants, He continues to prove Himself faithful to us today.

THURSDAY // EXODUS 4-5

God had big plans for Moses, but Moses was not convinced God picked the right man for the job. Moses voiced hesitation at what God asked of him, so God gave him three signs and promised to send his brother Aaron to assist him. Each of the signs—turning the staff into a snake, turning Moses' hand leprous, and turning water into blood—revealed God's power over the created world, which reminded Moses and all the Israelites that God also had the power to set them free. Convinced that he should obey God, Moses met up with Aaron, and the two assembled the Israelites and showed them God's signs. As a result, the people worshiped God, thanking Him for hearing their prayers (4:18-31). However, they had a long road to freedom. Chapter 5 describes Moses' and Aaron's first meeting with Pharaoh, who responded to their request for freedom by denying God's existence and making life for the Israelites even more difficult.

FRIDAY // EXODUS 6-7

When God called Moses, the plan was to use Moses to set the Israelites free. Yet in the eyes of the Israelites, that plan seemed to backfire. When Moses complained to God, God reminded Moses of His connection to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and reaffirmed His covenant with them. He promised to deliver the Israelites and to bring them to a new land, the promised land. God revealed that prolonging the Israelites' suffering had a purpose, just like the sufferings of Joseph and Job. Since Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go, God would bring His people out by His power. Through his wondrous acts, the Egyptians would see the glory of God. Pharaoh's continued refusal to free God's people brought about ten plagues, the first of which was the plague of blood. One must not miss the great truth about God tucked away in Exodus 6. In God's reassurance to Moses, He described the process of revelation and redemption by which all people are saved: "I will deliver you ... I will redeem you ... I will take you as My people, and I will be your God" (6:6-7). Here again the cross of Christ was foreshadowed.

WEEKEND // CATCH UP NEEDED?