

Small Group Material
A Journey of Faith with Joseph
God's Sovereignty
Genesis 45.16-47.27

Welcome If you had to move to a new country to live, which one would you choose and why?

Worship

Listen again to this well-known song - and pray for God to continue his work in you: 'Purify my heart'. Click on the picture at the end for the link to appear.

Word

In today's study, there are two themes about God's sovereignty which come through very clearly.

A. God's sovereignty in and through our trials and sufferings.

Read Genesis 45.16-28 The passage illustrates how God uses difficulties to shape and transform Joseph's character which would be needed for the role that God was giving Joseph as the ruler of Egypt. This took place over a period of 30 years, 17 of these in a troubled childhood and 13 in prison.

1. Look back to ch 45.4-7. What do these verses tell us about Joseph's perspective that it was God rather than his brothers who had put him through the difficult things he had experienced?
2. How does that make you feel about your own trials and sufferings? How would your attitude and relationship with God be different if you shared Joseph's view?
3. How does Joseph co-operate with God's refining process? What are some of the fruits we see emerging in his character, cf 45.14-15, 24; 46.28-29?

B God's sovereignty in a time of abundance. Read Genesis 46.28-47.12 In this passage we read of God's favour resting on Joseph and

how he gave him wisdom and discernment to rule for the blessing of Egypt, his own people and the world.

1. Loyalty and kindness were two of Joseph's strong suits but they were played inconsistently on the job. In what ways was Joseph loyal (cf 47.16-26) and in what ways was he kind (47.11-12, 27)?
2. What do these verses tell us about the blessings of trials and temptations (cf James 1.2-5) and the dangers of material prosperity (Deut 8.10-14, 17-18)? There's an ancient Arab proverb which says that 'All sunshine makes a desert'.

For discussion and reflection:

1. Based on Joseph's story in this passage, how would you define 'divine providence'?
2. How are we allowing God to refine us and what do we think he is using to bring this about?

Witness

Pray for the new staff as they settle into Chippy and their new roles - Joel (and Sasha) - youth worker; Bekah (and Kieran) - Children and families worker; Hannah (and Phil) - Community worker.

Pray for all those who've been doing Alpha and the impact of the Holy Spirit morning (Saturday 19th Sept).

