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M I N I S T R I E S

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Parashah Points: Miketz – Joseph’s Self-Control

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Miketz, which is Hebrew for “at the end,” and it goes from Genesis 41:1 to Genesis 44:17.

This parashah tells the story of Joseph’s interpretation of Pharaoh’s dreams, which leads to his rise to power in Egypt (Genesis 41).

Due to a famine in the land of Canaan, Joseph’s brothers then travel to Egypt to buy grain where they encounter Joseph who, at this point, is the second in command over all of Egypt. But after many years apart, Joseph’s brothers didn’t recognize him (Genesis 42:1-17).

Joseph orders his brothers to go back to Canaan and bring his brother Benjamin back to Egypt. (Genesis 42:18-38).

Joseph’s brothers return to Egypt with Benjamin (Genesis 43).

The parashah concludes with Joseph detaining Benjamin (Genesis 44:1-17).

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re just going to present a thought on having self-control. (Genesis 43:29-3)

Joseph was a man who faced many trials, including being hurt and betrayed by his own family. Yet, as difficult as Joseph’s life was, God used those difficulties to bring him to the place where he could be used to accomplish God’s will. Through a series of God-ordained encounters in prison, he was given the opportunity to meet with the Pharaoh. Shortly after interpreting the Pharaoh’s dreams, he was given authority over all of Egypt!

When a famine caused Joseph’s brothers to travel to Egypt to buy grain, Joseph used his authority to order them to bring Benjamin—Joseph’s full brother, the only other son of his mother Rachel—to

Egypt. When they arrived again with Benjamin, Joseph was overwhelmed with emotion:

Genesis 43:29-31

And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!" Then Joseph hurried out, for his compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And he entered his chamber and wept there. Then he washed his face and came out. And controlling himself, he said, "Serve the food."

Can you imagine the flood of emotions Joseph must have felt in this moment? Reconnecting with his family likely brother about immense joy mixed with anger and the ache of betrayal. While he was glad to see Benjamin, he likely still dealt with painful memories of being hated and abandoned by his other brothers.

Noticing that he was getting overwhelmed, and not wanting to ruin this chance to reconcile with his family, Joseph excused himself so that he could find "a place to weep." After removing himself from the situation until he could regain control of his emotions, he was able to return to the company of his brothers without causing any drama.

We've all been in heated arguments where we've lashed out or did or said something that we later regretted. In passionate situations it's often hard to keep your cool. We can learn a valuable lesson from Joseph in how to handle those situations.

When we notice that we're about to be pushed beyond what we can handle emotionally, we practice self-control—a fruit of the Spirit. We know, that it's easier said than done, right? But one practical thing we can do is what Joseph did—that is, step away from the situation for a short time. After we vent, weep, pray, or do whatever we have to do in private to regain control, we can then return to resolve the situation peacefully.

So the next time you find yourself in a heated argument, or in a moment you have been wronged, and you recognize that you're about to lose control of your emotions, then immediately step away. Go into another room for a little while until you calm down. Take a deep breath and ask YHWH to give you the strength and wisdom to come back and address the situation with peace.

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverthing.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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