



**FISHHAWK**  
FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

[UN]Thankful

**The Danger of Blessings  
and Business**

Genesis 40:1-41:13

# LEADER'S GUIDE

## GETTING STARTED

> *As your group time begins, use this section for very brief review prior to showing the video to help get the conversation going.*

### Conversation Starters/Questions

Everyone share: In one sentence, why are you grateful for our group?

Finish this sentence: Thank You Jesus for ....

Has anyone ever made a deal with God? "God if You do \_\_\_\_\_, I will do \_\_\_\_\_.

Will you share your *deal* with the group?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS: Be sure to expect a wide range of answers. Some people will be new to LIFEGroup and may not know how to express what they are thinking. Others may have been helped physically, emotionally, or spiritually. Some may be grateful for having a group that meets consistently. Others may indicate that they appreciate prayer or serving together as a group.

## VIDEO NOTES >[Play Video](#)

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Read Genesis 40:1-22. Now go back and read vs. 14.

1) Have you ever been in a situation where things just were not going well with you and a friend let you down?

### SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

Being let down by others is a common human experience. Several biblical characters experienced the loneliness that comes from the mistreatment by others and learned the security that comes from the presence of God. For example:

Jacob (Joseph's father!) in *Gen 31:3* and *32:22-32*. Elijah in *1 Kings 19*. Paul in *2 Tim 4:16-18*.

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)

Read [Genesis 40:23](#)

2) Do you sometimes feel God has forgotten you? Can someone share an example? Do you have a time when you found out that it's never too late to do the right thing such as when the cupbearer eventually told Pharaoh about Joseph?

## SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

In *Matt 26:36-46; 69-75; and 27:27-31, 46*, our Lord experienced being forsaken by the Father and others. He was forsaken so we could always be in the presence of God. (*Psa 16:11*)

3) What commitments have you made to God or others that you still need to follow through on? Would you share this with the group?

## FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Reflect on the parable Jesus told in *Matt 21:28-32*. What is the context of this passage? What implications does it have for you? How does this parable encourage you to fulfill your commitments?

Is there any specific thing you would like to confess to the Lord and receive His forgiveness? (*1 John 1:9*)

How will you express your appreciation to the Lord for His forgiveness?

4) Discuss this quotation by Cannon Mosely: "The moment a man GETS what he WANTS is a TESTING one."

## FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

1. Have you found yourself thinking that you produced your success as Nebuchadnezzar did in *Dan 4:28-30*?
2. Have you become complacent as David did in *2 Sam 11* after his many successes in battle?
3. Have you found yourself craving the praise of others as Herod did in *Acts 12:20-23*?
4. How do these thoughts and feelings relate to Cannon Mosely's quotation?

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)

Read Genesis 41:1-14

5) God did not free Joseph for 2 more years. Do you have patience to wait on the Lord? How does Satan rob our patience? How can we be thankful through the hard times and when we need patience?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS: Put your faith in God, rather than men who may let you down. God restored Joseph's career and family life.

Read: *Genesis 39: 2,3,9, 21, 23; 40:8; 41:16,51; 42:18; and 50:19-20*. What truths did Joseph recognize during the good and bad times? Although this is a long list of Scriptures, a review of these beliefs will open up our eyes to truths that are *necessary* to be grateful and have patience.

To whom will you speak these truths in love?

6) Finish this sentence: Thank You Jesus, even though \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss: BLESSING + BUSYNESS = FORGETFULNESS

SUGGESTED ANSWER: Job (*Job 1:21*) and Paul (*1 Cor 15:57* and *Phil 4:11*) were able to give thanks, even in the midst of struggles. Will you?

## FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

What does God forget? *Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 43:25; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17*.

What does God remember? *Psalms 25:6*.

Who does God remember? *Hebrews 13:5; Luke 12:4-7*.

How could saturating your mind in these truths free you up in order to abide in God's love? (*John 15:9*)

## SUMMARY (My Take-Away for This Week)

- ⇒ It's one thing to give thanks when things are good, it's another to give thanks when things are bad.
- ⇒ Gratitude flows freely when we know we are forgiven.
- ⇒ It's never too late to express gratitude.

## WORK OUT (This Week's Assignments)

- Who in this group is willing to pray about leading a LIFEgroup?
- Has God brought us someone to fill the empty chair?
- Someone share about influencing your Andrew

## MY NEXT STEPS

1. Yes, I will participate in the 90 Day Giving Challenge from Nov. 10/11 – Feb. 10/11 and start tithing ten cents out of every dollar back to God through FFC.
2. This week, I will daily be intentional and turn all the devices and distractions off in order to spend at least 15 minutes silently remembering and thanking the LORD for all the blessings in my life/family.
3. This week, I will find ways to tangibly bless and encourage at least 2 people who have been a blessing in my life (small gift card, paying for a meal, serving them, etc.)
4. This week, I will memorize Ps. 143:, “I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands.”

## HOW MY GROUP CAN PRAY FOR ME THIS WEEK

**> Record Group Prayer Request Here:**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## COMMENTARY

**Introduction**

Israel's role as the people of promise was being jeopardized by their acceptance of the loose moral standards of the native Canaanites. To preserve His people, Yahweh removed them from that sinful environment to Egypt, where they could mature into the covenant nation that He was preparing them to be.

This explains the Joseph story. His brothers sold him to Egypt to be rid of their brother the dreamer. God, however, used their act of hate as an opportunity to save Israel from both physical famine and spiritual extinction. The rise of Joseph to a position of authority in Egypt in fulfillment of his God-given dreams illustrates the Lord's blessing upon His people. What appeared to be a series of blunders and injustices in Joseph's early experiences proved to be God at work in unseen ways to demonstrate His sovereign, kingdom work among the nations.

No one was more aware of this than Joseph, at least in later years. After he had revealed himself to his brothers, he said, "God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Years later after Jacob's death, when Joseph's brothers feared his revenge, he reminded them that they had intended to harm him, "but God intended it for good to accomplish ... the saving of many lives." Human tragedy had become the occasion of divine triumph. Joseph's dying wish—to be buried in the land of promise—looks past the future tragedy of Israel's experience of slavery and anticipates God's triumph in the exodus. (Eugene H. Merrill, "The Pentateuch," in *Holman Concise Bible Commentary*, ed. David S. Dockery [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998])

The apostle Paul held the conviction that "all things work together for good," referring to the good of kingdom purposes. Although the suffering Joseph endured was evil in itself, it was one of many events that in the wisdom and mercy of God was used to accomplish the good outcome purposed for his people (cf. Rom 8:28). (K. A. Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, vol. 1B, *The New American Commentary* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005])

**Question 1**

Just as the cupbearer gave no thought to Joseph whom he left languishing in prison, we find it easy to forget our indebtedness to others. The restored official did not intend to slight Joseph, but staying in the confidence of Pharaoh was such a responsibility that the young Hebrew soon drifted out of his consciousness. If we are permitting someone for whom we are responsible to remain in intolerable circumstances although we may be able to alleviate his suffering, the story of the absent-minded cupbearer should shock us back to consciousness. To forget such a person is kin to murder, for to us he has already ceased to exist. (Clyde T. Francisco, "Genesis," in *The Teacher's Bible Commentary*, ed. H. Franklin Paschall and Herschel H. Hobbs [Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1972])

**Question 2**

That the cupbearer forgets the Hebrew slave creates a narrative tension that makes for good storytelling but, more importantly, infers that Joseph's deliverance from his dungeon will only be accomplished by the gracious involvement of God. The reader is encouraged to suppose that a change in the events of chap. 40 would have hindered the positive outcome of chap. 41. If Joseph had been released by the intervention of the cupbearer prematurely, the train of events would have been derailed. (K. A. Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, vol. 1B, *The New American Commentary* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005])

## COMMENTARY

**Question 3**

**Matthew 21: 28-32.** Note that the father (representing God) gave both sons the same instructions. There was no prejudice or favoritism on the part of the father. Both sons started on a “level playing field,” having the same opportunity to obey or disobey. The two sons both ended up doing the opposite of what they said they would do. The emphasis is not on the initial statement of intention, but on the actual actions. Jesus’ question emphasized that God’s bottom-line concern was not a person’s verbal claims but what he actually did: Which of the two did what his father wanted? Actions are more significant than words. This was so obvious that even Jesus’ opponents answered correctly. It was the first son—the one who initially said no but who ultimately obeyed—who did the will of the father. (Stuart K. Weber, Matthew, vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000])

**Question 5**

Unexpectedly, Joseph came to power by humble subservience to others. The events of chaps. 39–41 demonstrate that a facile explanation of reward and punishment, based on moral choices alone, is not adequate to understand God’s relationship with his people. Joseph is the victim of Potiphar’s wife and the negligent cupbearer, but in each case the result proves to be a stepping-stone. Strikingly, Joseph’s greatest setback arose out of his greatest moral victory, when he resisted the advances of Potiphar’s wife (chap. 39). There are few nobler lines in the Bible than his avowal, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” (v. 9).

The overriding issue in Joseph’s life of humiliation was the purposes of God for the salvation of Israel’s forefathers and the nations (e.g., 12:3). Joseph later expressed understanding of the ultimate purpose for his suffering (45:5–8; 50:20). But to conclude that human choice made no difference is to overstate the matter. The muted voice of God in chaps. 40–41 indicates that the Lord works out his deliverance in different ways, both overtly, as in chap. 39, and opaquely, as in chaps. 40–41. God’s intervention, though obscure to the Egyptians themselves, pacifies the enemies of Israel and sets the course for their deliverance. The apostle Paul discerned the weightier dimension of the promise when he commented that the outsiders became insiders when they put their trust in Abraham’s descendant, Jesus Christ (e.g., Gal 3:8–9, 14; Eph 3:11–14). (K. A. Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, vol. 1B, The New American Commentary [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005])

**Question 6**

**Luke 12:4-7.** Look at God! He knows every one of the sparrows and cares for the daily fate of each one. Compare this to yourself. God knows how many hairs are on your head. Yes, he cares for you in this world and in the world to come. You are valued! Fear and reverence the one who values you, not the one who opposes you. (Trent C. Butler, Luke, vol. 3, Holman New Testament Commentary [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000])

**Prayer:** God of peace, give me peace and hope in the midst of life’s sorrows, pains, and frustrations. Let me experience your daily presence in such a way that I praise you no matter the outward circumstances or the inner turmoil. Lord, I will obey you no matter what the results seem to be. I am confident that you have eternal rewards for me beyond anything I can imagine. So I praise you for past memories, present hopes, and future blessings. Amen. (Thomas D. Lea, Hebrews, James, vol. 10, Holman New Testament Commentary [Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999])

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