**A Family Affair**

**(Genesis 37:23-36, Genesis 45:8-11)**

***Pastor Gilbert Tan***

So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe -the ornate robe he was wearing – and they took him and threw him into the cistern. The cistern was empty; there was no water in it. As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrhh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers, “What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed. So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt. When Reuben returned to the cistern and saw that Joseph was not there, he tore his clothes. He went back to his brothers and said, “The boy isn’t there! Where can I turn now?” Then they got Joseph’s robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. They took the ornate robe back to their father and said, “We found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son’s robe.” He recognized it and said, “It is my son’s robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces.” Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. “No,” he said, “I will continue to mourn until I join my son in the grave.” So his father wept for him. Meanwhile, the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard. (Genesis 37:23-36)

So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. Now hurry back to my father and say to him, “This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don’t delay. You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me – you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute. (Genesis 45:8-11)

# Introduction

Pastor Gilbert wishes all celebrating the festive season a Happy Chinese New Year and Happy holidays to all others too. He comments that this festival is actually “A Family Affair” especially for the family gatherings that are taking place during this time.

A time of get together where inter-generations meet; as generations move and get together, many things may happen. Things that are done may hurt another or words exchanged may cause pain to another. When this happens:

HOW DO WE RESPOND?



**BIG IDEA**: A Right Response is what is right in the eyes of God and not man.

# How do we respond when we get hurt?

We have a choice to respond to the situations when we hurt in two ways

* Our human emotional - man’s way.
* Look to God and respond to what is right in the eyes of God.

# Undeserved Life Experiences

In Joseph’s story, we see the many instances of Undeserved Life Experiences.

## Undeserved Jealousy

His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the mater in mind. (Genesis37:11)

## Undeserved Rejection

But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. (Genesis 37:18)

## Undeserved Cruelty

So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe – the ornate robe he was wearing – and they took him and threw him into the cistern. The cistern was empty; there was no water in it. (Genesis 37:23-24)

## Undeserved Life Crisis

Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed. 28So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt. (Genesis 37:27-28)

## Undeserved Injustice

One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger. Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined. (Genesis 39:11,19,20)

## Undeserved treatment for being kind

But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him. (Genesis 40:14, 23)

# The Right Response

There are 3 areas of response which we find Joseph applying in the situations he had experienced until God promoted him to the position that he had dreamed about as a young Man.

## The Right Response in Brokenness

When we face jealousy, rejection or being cruelly crush by someone, especially someone close like a family member, let not the hurt cause us to sin through bitterness or anger but Go to the Lord during these times.

For the Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:18)

If you are disappointed, give your contrite heart to the Lord, that you may be set free of the burden.

My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God will not despise. (Psalm 51:17)

## The Right Response to Challenges

When Joseph face the challenge of being put into prison because of his life crisis with his master’s

advances and then to meet with his brother during the famine he still remembers what God had

done for him in the past. He puts his Hope in God.

So, let us Praise Him and acknowledge He is our Savior and declare that He is Lord.

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your Hope in God, for I will yet

Praise Him my Savior and my God. (Psalm 42:5)

## The Right Response to Promotions

Our response to where we have been placed by God should be one of reflection of what God’s purpose is for our promotion – that we may Glorify Him through our promotion to do His good work.

Psalms 45:5-8 tells us of Joseph who saw that what he had gone through to be sold as a slave was for a higher purpose to save his family and others during the famine.

Conclusion

In this family of God, we too have a purpose to go through Undeserved Life Experiences in order to be

able to fulfil God’s purpose. Let us respond with the Right Responses to enable God to promote us to

Glorify Him. Hallelujah!



Sermon summary contributed by Michelle Chuah