

Prayer and Study Guide

Daily Scripture Readings – 2/17/19

Monday – Read Genesis 12:1-3. **Blessed to Be a Blessing.** God made a covenant with Abram who was later named Abraham in which God promised to give Abram a land, to make his family a great nation, and to bless Abram so that he would be a blessing to all of the families of the earth. God invites us to live in covenant with God. God has never broken a covenant or a promise. God continues to keep this promise through God's Church. Like, Abram, God promises to bless us so that we can be a blessing to others. We can build a legacy of faithfulness by daily seeking to do God's will. Spend some time in prayer thinking about all of the promises that God has kept in your life. How is God blessing you so that you can be a blessing to others?

Tuesday – Read Genesis 37:1-36. **Joseph's Dreams.** Not every legacy is a good legacy. Jacob learned the family tradition of picking a favorite son from his own parents, and the favoritism he showed Joseph caused the rest of his sons to hate Joseph. If you experienced a negative legacy in your family, how can you reverse this legacy for future generations of your family? Ask God to heal any hurts in your family. Joseph was a dreamer like his father, but he lacked wisdom. God spoke to Joseph through dreams, but at first Joseph focused more on his own glory rather than God's will. When he told his brothers of his dreams of ruling over them, they hated him so much they wanted to kill him, and they eventually sold him into slavery. What dreams has God given you that will shape your legacy? Ask God to help you seek God's will for your life as you pursue these dreams.

Wednesday – Read Genesis 39:1-41:57. **From Prison to Prime Minister.** The Lord was with Joseph even in the lowest moments of his life, and even as a teenager, Joseph was a man of good character and integrity. Over and over again Joseph created a legacy of faithfulness during the thirteen years he was a slave in Potiphar's house and a prisoner in a dungeon. Throughout this time, the Lord was with him and blessed him. God doesn't promise us that everything is going to go well in our lives, but God does promise to be with us. Joseph grew in wisdom, and God gave him the ability to interpret dreams. When he was 30, he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams about the coming famine, and Pharaoh made Joseph his second in command as his Prime Minister over Egypt's famine relief program. Joseph got married and named his firstborn *Manasseh*, "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." The second he named *Ephraim*, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my misfortunes." Thank God for the times when God has helped you through a very difficult season, and ask God to help you be faithful even during difficult seasons.

Thursday – Read Genesis 42:1-45:28. **A Legacy of Faithfulness.** Twenty-two years after Joseph dreamed that his brothers would bow down to him, his dream came true when they came to buy grain from him. As Joseph created a legacy of faithfulness he learned to walk in God's ways. Joseph revealed himself to his brothers and forgave them. In spite of all of the pain he had experienced, he was able to see God at work in his life. He told his brothers, "God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt." One of the greatest legacies we can create is a legacy of forgiveness that heals relationships. Think of a time when someone hurt you. How are you allowing God to redeem this evil by turning it into a blessing instead of a curse? How can Joseph's story strengthen your faith? Ask God to help you forgive this person.

Friday – Read I Peter 2:1-12. **Building a Spiritual House.** Peter writes, ⁴*Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and* ⁵*like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* Building a legacy of faithfulness does not happen quickly. Many people overestimate what they can do in the short run and underestimate what they can do in the long haul of a faithful life. Peter invites us to let ourselves be built into a spiritual house and to embrace our identity as *a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people*, so that we may do God's will. As you pray, consider the small steps you can take today that will impact your legacy in the future.

Saturday – Read Ephesians 4:1-6; 5:15-17. **Embrace Your Calling.** The Apostle Paul urges us *to live a life worthy of the calling you have received*, and he reminds us, ¹⁵*Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise,* ¹⁶*making the most of the time, because the days are evil.* ¹⁷*So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.* We find meaning and purpose when we embrace God's calling on our lives. As you pray, ask God to help you understand your calling and to live out that calling in your daily life.

Lectionary Readings: Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1; I Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26.

Find this Prayer and Study Guide at www.nicholshillsumc.org.