Preaching the Joseph Narratives: Genesis 37-50 Matthew McKellar SWBTS

**Insights for Preaching the Narrative Genre of the OT**

-digging deep into the text and avoiding mere moralism

-highlighting the explicit and being careful with the implicit (exegesis not eisegesis)

-giving attention to history, grammar and context

-thinking in terms of plot, scenes, characters, dialogue and repetition

-developing structure that reflects the text

 \*Inductive development

 \*Contemporary introduction

 \*Re-tell the story with specific structure (scenes/movements)

 \*Placement and delivery of the main idea/thesis (what is true + what to do)

 \*End-loaded application

 \*Connection to Christ

 \*Conclusion that summarizes and challenges

**Genesis 37:1-36: “From the Pit to the Palace”**

The last fourteen chapters of Genesis focus on events in the life of Jacob’s son, Joseph. This “favored son and hated brother” becomes a model for believers in both his low and high moments. However, making that connection, as valid as it is, without considering the overarching message of the Joseph narratives would be a short-sighted and lamentable error. Genesis 37-50 as a unit offers a compelling testimony of the sovereign supervision and providential provision of a great and glorious God in the midst of human dysfunction and depravity. We meet Him in these texts time and time again.

**The Lord’s selection of Joseph (1-11)**

-a continuing theme: the blessing of the Lord

-Joseph’s report to his father

-Joseph’s robe from his father

-Joseph’s revelation from the Lord

**The Lord’s subjection of Joseph (12-35)**

-favored son and hated brother

-dispatched by his father

-conspired against by his brothers

-Reuben’s intervention

-thrown into a pit

-sold into slavery

-the deception of his brothers and his father’s grief

**The Lord’s protection of Joseph (36)**

-preserved from death

-sold in Egypt to Potiphar

-imprisoned but later promoted (39:20-21 and 41:44)

-NT commentary: Acts 7:9-16

-connection to Christ

**So what?**

-Because the Lord is sovereign and merciful, you can trust him from the pit to the palace.

-Let the Lord’s promises guide you through the danger of prosperity and the detour of adversity.

-Remember that the Lord is never a victim of circumstances.

-“The Lord hath promised good to me, His word my hope secures; He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.” (Newton)

**Genesis 39:1-23: “Armed Resistance”**

This text records Joseph’s experience and triumph over temptation at a particularly vulnerable time in his life. His encounter with Mrs. Potiphar demonstrates that only a superior satisfaction in God can arm one against the ticking bomb of temptation.

**Blessed with the LORD’S presence (1-6a)**

-continuation from 37:36

-the LORD’S presence with Joseph

-favor in the sight of Potiphar

**Propositioned by Mrs. Potiphar (6b-10)**

-Joseph’s form and appearance: away/advancing/attractive

-proposition and refusal

-Joseph’s perspective

-Mrs. Potiphar’s persistence: powerful, punctual, persistent

**Falsely accused (11-18)**

-the problem intensified

-Joseph flees

-Mrs. Potiphar accuses

**Imprisoned but not abandoned (19-23)**

-Potiphar’s anger

-Joseph imprisoned: elevation/temptation/incarceration

-the LORD’S presence with Joseph

-connection to Christ

**So what?**

-When assaulted by the ticking bomb of temptation, arm yourself with a superior satisfaction in God.

-“The joy of the Lord will arm us against the assaults of our spiritual enemies and put our mouths out of taste for those pleasures with which the tempter baits his hooks.” (Henry)

-“Jesus is all the world to me, and true to Him I’ll be; Oh, how could I this Friend deny, when He’s so true to me…” (Thompson)