

— Session Two —
Day One Devotional

Preparedness in Community

Read Hebrews 10:23-25

The values in this passage represent the way the Preparedness Peace course has been structured. We want to lean hard into Jesus, learn how to encourage and build up one another physically, spiritually, and emotionally, and do it all in the context of relationship.

1.) In verse 23, a key statement is made, “...hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful.” What promise does this verse speak of? Who is the author speaking to?

2.) Are there personal promises you feel that the Lord has given you and your family? A personal promise God has given me was clearly spoken to me in a prayer meeting one night. I felt this presence over my right shoulder, and from behind me, He said, “I am *with* you.” It is amazing the power that the Word of God has in our lives. Sometimes he speaks things – implants them – into my heart and sometimes He highlights the Word and I know God is speaking that Scripture specifically to me. My most familiar way to hear from the Lord is in the wilderness... in the outdoors. Creation truly does reflect His glory (Psalm 19:1) and if we take the time to open our eyes and our ears, He will reveal Himself.

Write the promises the Lord has given you. If you don't feel you have a personal promise, ask the Lord for one – or more.

3.) Why do you think the author says “...[to] not give up meeting together...” with people who spur you on in your walk with the Lord, who are like-minded, and who call out your destiny in Jesus? What is the value of gathering together? How has it helped you in your walk with the Lord?

4.) He also says to “...spur one another on...” What does this mean and why do you think it is so essential to our walk with God?

Challenge: Ask the Lord for ways to encourage those around you this week. Cultivate life, encouragement, and boldness in your heart for the days to come.

— Session Two —
Day Two Devotional

The Lord Speaks About Things That Are to Come

Read Genesis 41:25-40

To refresh your memory, in chapters 39 and 40, Joseph has just spent several years in prison due to a false accusation by Potiphar's wife. While in prison, Joseph had great favor and was put in charge of all the men in prison, including Pharaoh's cupbearer and chief baker. One night, both men had dreams. Joseph told them that the Lord interprets dreams and correctly interpreted their dreams. Joseph asked that when they got out of prison that they would remember him and ask Pharaoh to release him. Both men were released from prison and their dreams came to pass, but both of them forgot about Joseph and two more years went by.

Then in one night, Pharaoh had two dreams that no one could interpret. Finally, the cupbearer remembers Joseph and tells Pharaoh he knows someone who might be able to interpret the dream. Joseph is summoned from prison, showers, shaves (probably the first time in over a year), and presents himself before Pharaoh. Pharaoh shares his dreams with him, and again, Joseph states, "I cannot do it, but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."

Regarding the crisis coming to Egypt, the Lord spoke in a dream to Pharaoh. Joseph, coming straight out of prison, accurately hears from the Lord and not only interprets Pharaoh's dream but gives a **plan of how to prepare a nation for seven years of famine**. Joseph was prepared to lead in the fire of prison, and all the while, maintained his heart before God.

1.) What three things stand out to you in this text?

2.) Does the Lord speak to you or anyone you know in dreams? Ask the Lord to speak to you and reveal Himself and His plans to you in your dreams.

3.) In verse 25 it says, "God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do." How do you feel about God bringing seven years of abundance and God bringing seven years of famine in Egypt? How does this fit into your image of God?

4.) God gave Joseph a seven year plan to prepare a nation. What was this plan? What is the Lord saying to you this week about how to prepare? Hear His voice. Trust Him and Obey.

5.) In what ways does God reveal His goodness in this Scripture?

— Session Two —
Day Three Devotional

Joseph's Heart Before God

Read Genesis 41:25-40

And now let Pharaoh find a wise and discerning man, one in whom is the Spirit of God, and put him in charge. Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land... they should collect food in the good years that will be used in the years of famine that will come upon Egypt. (Summary of Genesis 41:33-36)

It is important to note all of the *personal* preparation Joseph went through *before* he was ready to lead and have wisdom to lead a nation. Also consider that he came *straight* out of prison to interpret this dream. His heart must have been right before God. Good circumstances do not make you ready, but a right heart and knowledge of God make you ready to respond as the Lord leads you. Joseph was unjustly sentenced, abandoned, and forgotten by anyone who could release him, and having spent years of his life there, he emerges with a heart tender to the Lord, sensitive to His voice, and surrendered to His plans.

1.) Recount the seeming injustice of Joseph's life. What has happened to him to get him to this place?

How would you maintain your heart before the Lord if you were denied and sold by your family, left for dead, unjustly accused, forgotten about, and imprisoned for years?

2.) Can you look into your past and see a very hard, even unjust situation that you really suffered through? Has God used that specific situation in your life since then? How did that circumstance prepare you for something else in your life?

3.) Pharaoh knew exactly who he wanted to lead during these years of planning and famine. What does this speak to you about who will be needed to lead in the time of crisis?

4.) Pharaoh, Joseph and all the people of the courts worked together to implement this plan. This was a sustained effort of planning, labor, trust, and follow through. Can you imagine seven years of planning and seven *years* of crisis? What will you and your team need to sustain relationship and effectiveness for both a short-term crisis and a longer-term crisis?

— Session Two —
Day Four Devotional

Take Heed

Read Proverbs 27:12

1.) Do you see danger coming in the future? What type of danger? How does that affect your preparedness?

2.) List three consequences that you and your family could face if you are not prepared for a particular crisis.

3.) Pray about these specific situations now. What did you find yourself praying about the most? What words came to mind? Do you think this is God leading you by His Holy Spirit?

4.) 1 Thessalonians 5:14 says, “And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.” As you prepare and hear what the Lord is saying to you personally, will it shape the message you tell others about the times, seasons, and the need to prepare – physically, spiritually, emotionally?

— Session Two —
Day Five Prayer Topic

Pray for _____

*Spend this time praying for the situation your class has decided upon. Review your notes from last week. Ask God to continue to speak to you about specific people or details in this situation. What moves your heart as you pray? Maybe today it gets more specific. Stay with this focus and ask the Lord to reveal **more** to you today.*

— Session Four —
Day Three Devotional

The One Who Sustains Us

Read Psalm 54:4; Psalm 3:4-6

I don't believe that David – the author of both of these psalms – always knew the Lord as His help and the One who sustained him. I believe that David's journey through both good times and difficult times solidified his confidence and knowledge of the Lord as the One who sustains him. When crisis hits we, like David, find that the Lord is the One sustains us during those times. David learned that when he called out to the Lord, the Lord answered him! This is so important – to know that the Lord hears and answers us – and that gives us confidence to cry out to the Lord for all that we need and to trust Him to sustain us, even in crisis when the stakes seem much higher.

The Lord took David on a journey throughout his life so that he got to the place where he “...did not fear though tens of thousands assail me on every side.” (Psalm 3:6). Amazing! David is describing a time of great crisis in his life, yet even in that time he did not fear. Our prayer is that we would all be able to make this same declaration during the various crises in our lives. The only way we learn these lessons is through developing our relationship with the Lord over time, learning to hear and obey His voice, and learning to receive all we need from Him – He truly is the One who sustains!

1.) Do you know the Lord as your help and as the One who sustains you? Do you, like David, know that when you call out to the Lord that He answers you? Reflect and write some of the ways the Lord has heard and answered your prayers.

2.) What about the situations in your life where you had difficulties and could not take care of them on your own? Did the Lord show up in that place of need? Recount the testimony of God's faithfulness and His power to sustain you.

3.) How does it make you feel when you hear David say that tens of thousands assailed him on every side, yet he did not fear? Would that be your response today? Ask the Lord to reveal your fears to you. Write what He says here.

Ask Him to help you release your fears to Him, specifically as you consider your preparedness journey and the crises that are sure to come.

— Session Five —
Day Four Devotional

My Ways Are Higher Than Your Ways

Read Isaiah 55:8-11

1.) Think of a time of personal hardship or crisis. What did you come to know about the Lord during that time that you didn't know before?

2.) What do you think the Lord is saying in verses 8 and 9? "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." How does this make you feel?

3.) Have there been times in your life when you've been able to trust God when what He was saying didn't make sense? Did you continue to trust Him when you couldn't see how the situation would turn out? As we continue on our journey and build a history of trusting God and allowing His ways to prevail in our lives, it will get easier and easier to trust Him in all circumstances. Ask the Lord to help you to agree with His ways and trust Him more and more.

4.) Anyone who has ever grown a garden understands how essential and powerful rain is to growth and fruit. The rain nourishes seedlings, causes them to grow and yield seed, which then can be used to make bread and feed a city. Verse 11 states God's Word is like this. Like the rain, it ***will*** cause things to bud and flourish in our lives and other peoples' lives. This should cause us to take great hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the words He has spoken over our lives, and every promise whispered to our hearts. How does this verse impact your heart?

— Session Five —
Day Five Prayer Topic

Pray for _____

Ask God to speak to you about specific people or details in this situation. Have you seen the Lord provide answers to your prayers?

— Session Six —
Day Three Devotional

Leading in Crisis

Read 2 Kings 6:8-16

Again, we find ourselves in the middle of crisis and there is a man of God, Elisha, who knows things by the Spirit of God and is used by God to lead in crisis.

1.) Think upon verse 12 “...Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom.” Elisha, this man of God, is ***tuned*** in to the Spirit. We can see from this story that Elisha has many spiritual gifts and uses them to honor the Lord. What gifts has the Lord given to you? How do you use them to bring Him glory?

2.) Elisha, called the man of God, is advisor to the king of Israel. Joseph was the wisest and most discerning man according to Genesis 41:39, in whom was the spirit of God, and he served as advisor to the king. Again, Scripture is revealing the need for men and women of God who know the Lord’s voice and His heart to be ready to serve the leaders of our land in times of crisis. Whether on a family level or a national level, how is the Lord preparing you to ***lead*** others?

3.) The principles of Proverbs 27:12 are at work in this passage. The king of Israel ***heeds*** Elisha’s warnings and takes precautions as he travels. As this course comes to a close, do you feel there is any wise counsel the Lord is saying to heed? Do you feel you have any wise counsel for others?

4.) In verses 15 and 16, Elisha’s servant goes outside in the morning and is frightened to see an army surrounding their city! He yells, “Elisha! What should we do?” Elisha says, “Don’t be afraid, those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” This is the reason we do not walk this journey of faith alone. We ***need*** people who stand beside us and remind us of the truth. Are you surrounded by people who encourage you and speak truth over you? Seek out these friendships. Be this kind of friend and you will ***have*** these friends.
