

Dreams Come True
By Lori Broschat

Genesis and Exodus are two well known books of Scripture for their history and theology, yet what they truly are is really great stories. They read like a novel.

Aside from the hero stories, these ancient books chronicle in a most compelling way a most common human condition – conflict.

This is nowhere more evident than in the story of Abraham and his descendants. Starting with Cain and Abel, a perpetual struggle between brothers plagued Abraham's people – Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and Jacob's sons.

The story of Joseph spans a great deal of time and material in Genesis. Our lectionary cycle shows us only the beginning and the end. The rest we have to read for ourselves.

We all know the story of what Joseph – Dad's favorite, fancy coat, thrown into a pit, sold into slavery, taken to Egypt. What we missed between last week and this week is significant. Joseph possessed a gift to interpret dreams and because of his gift he earned himself a place of authority in Pharaoh's court.

He saved the people of Egypt from starvation during a seven-year famine. He was made governor of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh, the kind of position of which some can only dream.

Joseph did dream of it. He dreamed that he would one day be elevated above his jealous brothers. His mistake was telling them about it, which is why he ended up in the pit. They could not have known that Joseph's dreams were really more like prophecies than wishful thoughts.

We use the word "dream" to describe something we do when we do while sleeping or awake. Should we not distinguish between something we do not control and something for which we hope?

Some hope for reconciliation, some for revenge. We want those who have hurt us to understand the depth of our pain they have caused. When Joseph was reunited with his brothers they did not recognize the brother they had discarded. Joseph's reaction to his brothers was one of great emotion. Three times in Genesis we read that Joseph wept. The last time was so intense that the whole palace heard him.

It is okay for us to be emotional about those moments in life when our situation overwhelms us. Joseph had been living with memories of violence done to him, mixed with his own feelings of sadness, anger, and homesickness. Joseph did not seek revenge, even though his authority would have allowed him to do so. He dreamed of forgiveness and reconciliation, and made it happen.

Picture the worst that anyone has ever done to you. Now imagine extending forgiveness by telling that person that God was in the details, [working through them to turn lost sorrow into hope.]

How much more freeing would that be than simply holding their actions against them forever? That would be beyond forgiveness. That would be grace.

Let us pray...

**Holy One of Israel, covenant-keeper,
you restore what is lost,
heal what is wounded,
and gather in those who have been rejected.**

**Give us the faith
to speak as steadfastly as did the Canaanite woman,
that the outcast may be welcomed
and all people may be blessed. Amen.**