

## PASSING THROUGH THE GATES OF BETRAYAL

by Carter Conlon

Many people have suffered betrayal as a Christian. This often causes them to live in a place of defeat where God cannot pour into them his full provision. As you read this message I believe there is going to be deliverance for you. Deliverance will mean not living behind gates of betrayal, where the devil would want to keep you.

### ■ BETRAYAL CAN HAVE A PURPOSE IN YOUR LIFE

*Psalm 105:16-22: Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him. The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.*

To fully grasp how God can have a purpose through betrayal, let us take a look at the life of Joseph. He was the man whom God would one day use to supply provision for others, including his own family. God had a plan to preserve the lives of his own people which ultimately involved moving them to another place. To do this he sent a severe famine throughout the land. Before God would bring about this time of great provision through Joseph, he was first called to walk a very difficult path. We read in verse 18, God took Joseph on a journey that literally brought pain to his feet. In other

words, God allowed hard times to come into Joseph's life to prepare him for what was ahead.

For God's provision to flow through you to others it may mean taking journeys in life that you and I would rather not take and places we would rather not go. Some of you have had to walk a very hard path, and you've had these conflicts in your mind: "God, I thought this was going to be a walk of blessing. I thought it was going to be one of constant provision and joy. I've had this impression, but I seem to be called to walk in such a difficult place, enduring hardship when others around me appear to be on an easier journey."

### ■ DREAMS THAT GOD GIVES

Remember when you were a child and your feet hit the ground with wonderful expectations of life? You lived in anticipation of what was going to happen every day. Joseph was like this in his early years when he had a dream in his heart. In Genesis 37, it says he dreamed God loved him and he would one day be in a highly favored position. God also has an incredible purpose concerning your life, something only you can do, and the moment you come to him, he begins to let you know what it is. It may not be grand in the sight of man, but it's grand in the sight of God. He looks down upon you with favor, and empowers you, fulfilling the purpose that has been assigned to your life. God gives you the desire, and then fulfills that desire.

### ■ BETRAYED BY FAMILY

As a teenager, Joseph, knew he had

been favored by God. Even though he understood God had a plan for his life, he could not have known it would include being betrayed by his family. In much the same way when you were a young Christian, you set out on this journey with an incredible sense of the favor of God on your life. You loved everyone and everyone loved you. Wrong!

Joseph's father had said to him, "Go and see how your brothers are doing," so he headed down the road that day in childlike obedience. But when Joseph met up with his brothers they laid hold of him, and in a moment of jealousy sold him into slavery to passing traders. These traders took Joseph bound with chains into Egypt. Joseph endured things that would stop most people in their tracks. This betrayal by his family was the beginning of a journey that would result in many years of suffering.

I don't know if there's any deeper betrayal than that which comes from those whom you thought loved you, those you became vulnerable with. Some of you have known this pain, even when you came to Christ and thought everything was going to be different.

### ■ BETRAYED BY EVERYONE AROUND HIM

After several years in Egypt and faithful service to a man called Potiphar, Joseph was again betrayed. Potiphar's wife could not gain Joseph's affections so she decided to cause him great harm by slandering his character to her husband. This man knew Joseph would not have

acted with any impropriety, but still he chose to believe this evil report and had Joseph imprisoned. While in jail Joseph is betrayed once again by a fellow inmate. This man promised to help Joseph when he was in a position to do so, but immediately after his release he forgot all about Joseph. I don't know about you, but after thirteen years of this, I might be inclined to pack it in, find a cabin somewhere and just give up.

### ■ THE DOORWAY OF SUFFERING

The New Testament tells us that suffering is, in measure, a doorway to a depth of Christ that you cannot know in any other way. Through suffering, God can bring you into some of the darkest prisons to minister to people in their suffering; to give them true hope and not just theories and pat scriptural answers.

Look at Paul and Silas. We want to sing about their victory, the earthquake that opened prison doors, and the jailer and his family being saved. We forget that the precursor to the prison doors opening were stripes laid on their backs, false accusations, public beatings and humiliation. Paul said in Philippians 3:10: *That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death.* Paul knew suffering was a doorway to fellowship with Christ.

### ■ ARE YOU WILLING TO GO THROUGH SUFFERING

Matthew 20:20 — *Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the*

*baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.*

James and John answered, "We are able to drink of this cup." How quickly we answer God, and run to the altar, not understanding what we are asking for.

Jesus said to James and John, "You want to sit with me where I am. Are you then able to endure rejection, betrayal, and wrath that you do not deserve without losing heart and focus? Are you able to drink the cup I have to drink to get to that place? Are you willing to be baptized with the same baptism I'm baptized with? Are you willing to walk in the will of God, and allow God's plan for your life to be fulfilled? Can you follow me even if it means pain, sorrow, misunderstanding, being scorned and even death? Are you willing to let me be your source of life and supply to others?"

Jesus could ask this because He was a man who would be betrayed. He was betrayed by Judas. He was betrayed by countless hundreds, maybe even thousands; some of whom he may have even fed on the mountaintops. This crowd stood before him and said, "Away with him, give us a murderer, give us a thief—away with this Christ—crucify him." Jesus went to the cross and suffered the wrath of God, the wrath we deserved. So the question remains, "Are you able to drink the cup I have had to drink?"

### ■ PROVING OF YOUR FAITH

The enemy's plan while Joseph was imprisoned was to keep him behind the gates of betrayal for all of his days; to have him believe he should merely endure people and look out only for himself. Yet these trials were permitted in Joseph's life to increase his faith and trust in God. God's plan for his people was to flow through Joseph with incredible provision.

Unfortunately, there are many people

in the Body of Christ who have never come close to fulfilling what God has for their lives. Could this be you? Instead of growing in faith you sit behind the gates of betrayal not willing to trust people or be vulnerable again. You don't like people, loving people is no longer an option. You can't come under leadership, because leadership at some point betrayed you, whether it was your father, mother, guardian, or a boss. You vowed never to trust leadership again. You cannot come under authority, you cannot walk in a ministry, or in unity with anyone else. You are living exactly where the devil wants you to be.

You might have heard sermons like these before, occasionally gone to the altar, and asked God to help you forgive. You might have had momentary relief, but you were not really free the way you thought you were going to be. You might be discouraged, but don't despair. God will not allow you to go through a trial without His power and aid. 1Corinthians 10:13: *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Every person who has been used in any considerable measure in God's kingdom has had to go through betrayal. You see it throughout the scriptures. Jesus Christ was betrayed. John the Baptist, Isaiah, and Jeremiah were all betrayed. Look throughout history and you will find all great men and women who were used of God went through the gates of betrayal. You will not know the fullness of what God wants for you if you cannot get through these same gates.

### ■ JOSEPH'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE GATES OF BETRAYAL

Once Joseph was released from prison, he was placed in a position where he had the keys to great

provision, even for those who had wounded him. People are going to come to you because you are in Christ, sitting in a place where there is abundant provision. Hungry people that once wounded you, people in your neighborhood, on your job, in your family, will seek you out and you are going to have to deal with this.

When Joseph's brothers first appeared before him, the memory of their betrayal came flooding back. Genesis 42:7: *Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them and made himself strange to them, and spoke roughly to them.* The best Joseph could do at this time was to speak roughly to them. Sometimes that's just where you are. You can't speak civilly to people who have hurt you. You try to cover it with some Christian words, but there is a roughness in your speech. It's not defeat. This was just the beginning of God bringing Joseph through the gates of betrayal, and he will do the same for you.

Joseph's brothers stood before him and claimed to be honest men. When Joseph asked, "Who are you?" they replied that they were all one man's sons and true men. Yet here they were standing before the man they had once betrayed. When somebody has betrayed you and they are unwilling to admit their fault, they stand before you in self-righteousness. This might be one of the most galling moments you have to go through as a Christian.

God had already revealed to Joseph there would be a famine for seven years. He knew there was no hope of his brothers and family ever surviving, yet it was within his power to provide for them. He must have had a battle in his mind. If you have the provision of God, why should you give it to those who have betrayed you? They were not even willing to admit who they were—betrayers!

Joseph placed them all in prison for three days. This might have made him feel good at the time. You might also feel a sense of justification when you keep people in a prison of unforgiveness for days on end. But the scripture says in Matthew 18:28: *But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*

### ■ MERCY TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGEMENT

I can't help but wonder what was going on in Joseph's heart the three days his brothers were in prison. Maybe the Lord reminded Joseph of the mercy he had been shown when he was in jail. So on the third day Joseph said to his brothers, *this do and live, for I fear God...go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses.* This is about as merciful as Joseph could get; he told them, "Just go. Here's your corn – just leave." You might think by this action Joseph had forgiven all the debt, but he still had a way to go.

In Genesis 42:22-24, Joseph hears the brothers talking in their distress,

as Reuben exclaims, *Did I not tell you, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? Therefore, behold, also his blood is required. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept.* Joseph battled in his heart; he saw his brothers were only concerned about the present trouble they were in. He hears no true sorrow for what they had done to him. You see, for Joseph, it was no longer about the fact they betrayed him; rather, it was the fact that they were not dealing truthfully with the deception of their own hearts.

### ■ A YEARNING FOR RECONCILIATION

Despite the struggle of his heart there was a growing yearning for reconciliation in Joseph. You see this in Genesis 43:30, *And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.* Joseph yearned for reconciliation with his brothers but wasn't sure if he could be vulnerable with them. A desire to be reconciled with people who have hurt you is clear evidence you are moving through the gates of betrayal.

You know Joseph is now passing through into the victory God had originally intended for him as he opens himself up to his brothers. Genesis 45:1-5, *Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud.* God does not always call you to go back to past hurts with a big smile on your face. There are real emotions involved. When you go back to someone who hurt you, it may involve a lot of tears. Joseph was now willing to do it. He had come

to the point of understanding God's plan and therefore wept aloud, saying, *I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.*

### ■ THE GATES OF HELL CANNOT PREVAIL

When you finally get to this point in your life as Joseph did, you understand God has been in control all along. Everything he allowed in your life was for a divine purpose and this purpose was to be a source of provision for others. You are called to walk with him, to drink the cup that he drank. God loves you, even though in your hurt you may have drawn back from Him.

Jesus said, "You are my church and the gates of hell cannot prevail against you." It's time for you not to let wounds and hurts stop you from what God has for your life, and the provision that he is going to flow through you. The gates of hell cannot prevail! That means they can't hold you back if you have a heart for truth. If you have a heart for God, and if you want to go on with Christ, then no gate can ever stop you. Hallelujah!

### ■ IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO ARISE

I want to challenge you with everything that is in me because of the lateness of the hour we live in. The famine is already here, and people are starving. It's time for you to arise; the gate is open, but you have to make the choice to walk through it. Joseph did and was blessed on the other side. David also made the choice and he too

was blessed. In Psalm 23, he wrote *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...* He did not remain in the valley but walked through it to the other side.

David realized the revelation of the promises and provision of God in his life came when he walked through the valley. Therefore he could say, *God's provision of Goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.*

I shared the life of Joseph in this message to show that with God there is a process involved in moving through the gates of betrayal. You no longer have to live behind those invisible bars of past betrayals. You will be vulnerable once again. Will you get hurt? Probably! But will you get through it? Absolutely! The end result of this victory will be even greater provision from God. God will give you fresh insight into his Word; he'll give you boldness and words of knowledge and faith in troubled times. You will stand in the midst of adversity and be a testimony for the living God.

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### TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of "The Cross and the Switchblade." It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

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### WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday	10:00AM	3:00PM	6:00PM
Tuesday	7:00PM	Church Service	
Thursday	7:00PM	Intercessory Prayer	
Friday	7:00PM	Church Service	

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