



INTRODUCTION

Timeline—Part 4

We all love stories. They make us feel like we are a part of something bigger than ourselves. They can stir the imagination and engage the heart. They motivate us, influence us, and have the unique ability to build connections. So, it's no wonder that the Bible is the most beloved book of all time!

In this series, Timeline, we'll explore the stories that span 4,000 years of biblical history, from Genesis to Malachi. As we focus on some of the most beloved stories in the Old Testament, we'll discover that in every story the overarching theme is God's desire to have a relationship with us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you grew up with a sibling or siblings (like Joseph did), share your family birth order and any memories that you have about getting along or not getting along with each other. Hopefully no one ever got tossed into a pit!
2. Joseph's story covers a lot of Scripture - Genesis 37 to 50. Which part of his story or specific verses impact you the most and why?
3. Like Joseph, we all experience pain and brokenness.
 - Things that just happen in life
 - Things that we have done and regret
 - Things that people have done to hurt us

Of these categories, where have you experienced the most pain and brokenness in life?
Share at whatever level you are comfortable with sharing.

4. God can use your pain for His purpose.
 - In what ways have you seen God use your pain for His purpose as promised in Romans 8:28?
 - Moving forward, which of these applications do you need to keep in the forefront?
 - Let people in - Galatians 6:2
 - Leverage your pain - 2 Corinthians 2:1-5
 - Look to Jesus - Hebrews 12:1-2
5. Close in prayer.

APPLICATION

Everyone experiences pain and brokenness, but we don't always understand it. Pain often comes from one of three places: circumstances out of our control, a choice we made, or a choice someone else made. Any of these three situations can leave us feeling helpless and hurt. But God can use our pain for His purpose.

First, we can share our pain and burdens with others. When we let people in, they can help us carry the burdens so we don't have to do it alone. Second, we can leverage our pain and come alongside someone else that may be experiencing the same pain. We can help others get through a familiar situation. Third, we can look to Jesus. Pain can sometimes drive us away from God, but we can choose to draw closer to Him in tough times. Jesus knows what it means to endure pain, and He is always there for us when we are in pain. Our relationship with Jesus can be strengthened if we continue to trust in Him through the difficulties we may face.

KEY VERSES (HCSB)

Romans 8:28	Genesis 50:15-21
Genesis 37:1-4, 18-24	Galatians 6:2
Genesis 39:6-20	2 Corinthians 1:3-5
Genesis 41:46-49	Hebrews 12:1-2
Genesis 45:1-5, 14-15	