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Daily Devotional - Monday, July 22, 2024 - Guilty Conscience

JULY 22ND 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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As a seminary teacher, over the years I have had a handful of students confess to me that they cheated in a course. By the time they come to me, I can tell that they had been living with the guilt and it ate away at them. There is almost nothing worse than a guilty conscience.

After the famine, predicted by Pharaoh's dream, hit the land of Canaan, Jacob sent his sons down to Egypt to purchase food for the family (v. 2). We get a glimpse into the family life of Joseph's brothers. Jacob was protective of Joseph's full-brother, Benjamin, and did not send him on the journey (v. 4). Their father was still playing favorites.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

PSALM 32:5

In Egypt, Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him (v. 7). We can only imagine the thoughts and emotions that ran through Joseph's mind and heart. After questioning his brothers closely, he discovered that Benjamin was not sent with the rest. Joseph decided to put his brothers to the test. Would they betray Benjamin like they had betrayed him (v. 15)?

After three days in custody, the brothers confessed to each other what was on their minds: "Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that's why this distress has come on us" (v. 21). All these years, they had been living with guilt over what they had done to Joseph.

David vividly described the experience of living with guilt in Psalm 32: “When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer” (Ps. 32:3–4).

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