

Music: <introductory music>

Rebecca: Hello and welcome to Mind the Gap, a commentary podcast about all those verses that get left out of the readings in the Revised Common Lectionary. I am one of your hosts, Becca. My pronouns are she/her. I'm a Lutheran pastor in Michigan, and I've been serving in parish ministry for five years.

Annemarie: And I'm your other host, Annemarie. My pronouns are she/her. I'm a Lutheran pastor in New Jersey, and I've been serving in parish ministry in the ELCA for 15 years.

Rebecca: You know how the lectionary pericopes occasionally skip over a handful of verses in the middle of a passage? We are putting those pieces back into the readings so that we can hear them in their entirety and give ourselves a chance to explore what they mean altogether...

Annemarie: ...how the exclusion of those verses does or doesn't change things, and what (if any) wisdom we can gain for our preaching by minding that gap.

Rebecca: Before we jump into sharing with one another what's on our mind and our episode commentary, we wanna start off by thanking our newest patron, David. Thank you so much for supporting us on Patreon in this way. We also are so grateful for all of our patrons, including Jennifer and Jerry, Melissa, Liz. Um, we are grateful for your support. Um, we now have our list, our curated resource list available for patrons who sign up on any level. It's being hosted on our website. When you sign up, there is a code that will give you access to this exclusives page. Um, and because of where we are at with our patrons, um, we are actually at the point where we are going to be able to start offering transcripts. So we are so excited to be able to bring this, uh, piece of accessibility, um, to our podcast and this whole project.

So thank you to everyone for your support. If you're interested in being able to support Mind the Gap financially, um, you can offer one time tips, um, at ko-fi.com, or you can become a regular patron at various financial levels, um, on our Patreon page, and links to both of those can be found on our website, mindthegaprcld.com. Uh, but we have a double episode this week with gaps in the semicontinuous Old Testament reading, and the semicontinuous Psalm. So we're gonna get going, um, with that really soon. And first, share with each other what's on our minds. So, Annemarie, I'm looking forward to hearing this week. What's on your mind?

Annemarie: Well, I am just this week, uh, getting excited for what's coming this fall. I am in a new, uh, ministry context, and I have been able to think about new members', class and confirmation and, um, getting some real enthusiasm and excitement back in my own self for those things. Uh, and remembering and being excited for new resources that are out for these, uh, classes and these things. And really, um, in my current interim, there is, is just this buzz of, of excitement and enthusiasm for some of these offerings. And so, um, it's just really nice to be in a place where, uh, uh, that, uh, I can get excited genuinely, and not worry that people will show up or people are clamoring for these kinds of, of experiences. So, uh, this week has just been full of planning, uh, for September and beyond. So, uh, on my mind right now is just, uh, the excitement about what's to come and getting my feet kind of back into, um, ministry in a way that is not only flexing those

muscles that I've been honing in seminary and then in ministry experience, but also, um, just getting, getting my legs under me again. So I'm excited about that. Uh, Rebecca, what is on your mind?

Rebecca: As we record this, my congregation is a couple of days away from the beginning of vacation Bible school, so my brain is a little fried. My brain is all VBS all the time. Um, I have complicated feelings and opinions about VBS. Um, I appreciate it for what it is. Um, I think we avoid asking ourselves some difficult questions around return on investment and, um, how much of the focus is on and, and I'm sure this is not universal for vacation Bible schools, um, but I see it a lot. I'm not just referring to my own current context, um, you know, the kind of balance between spectacle and actual faith formation, um, and other things. And I, I'm not like intentionally trying to dance around it, like I genuinely think it's a, a, uh, difficult topic because it's a beloved program by people, and people do have really fond memories of it and everything. And also next week, I will call my mom while I'm driving home and be like, it was so fun today, and the kids said this, and we sang this song. Um, so I have a lot of fun doing it. Um, and maybe I'm just feeling like a grump because, uh, the week before <laugh> involves so much, it involves so much. Um, so that's what's on my mind. <laugh>, not a lot of coherence, just a lot of VBS.

Annemarie: I think that we both represent, uh, the constant dichotomy, paradox of pastoral ministry today.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Annemarie: We're at the same time excited and exhausted all the time.

Rebecca: Yeah. Oh, all the time. All the time. Yeah. Um, which is why hopefully, preachers and other listeners, um, this chance to dwell a little bit with the Word, um, will be helpful for, um, either your ministry or moving for your spirit. Um, but since we have those two gaps to get to, let's get going. First of all with the gap from Genesis.

Music: <piano music>

Annemarie: The first lesson for the semi-continuous series of readings for the eleventh Sunday after Pentecost in Year A is Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28...

Rebecca: ...meaning the gap we are exploring is Genesis 37:5-11. I will be reading the assigned verses...

Annemarie: ...and I'll be reading the verses that are left out of the lectionary.

Rebecca: Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. This is the story of the family of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.

Annemarie: Once Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. He said to them, 'Listen to this dream that I dreamed. There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright; then your sheaves gathered around it, and bowed down to my sheaf.' His brothers said to him, 'Are you indeed to reign over us? Are you indeed to have dominion over us?' So they hated him even more because of his dreams and his words. He had another dream, and told it to his brothers, saying, 'Look, I have had another dream: the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.' But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him, and said to him, 'What kind of dream is this that you have had? Shall we indeed come, I and your mother and your brothers, and bow to the ground before you?' So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Rebecca: Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, 'Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.' He answered, 'Here I am.' So he said to him, 'Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me.' So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, 'What are you seeking?' 'I am seeking my brothers,' he said; 'tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.' The man said, 'They have gone away, for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan." ' So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. They said to one another, 'Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.' But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, 'Let us not take his life.' Reuben said to them, 'Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him'—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, 'What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.' And his brothers agreed. When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

Music: <piano music>

Rebecca: And Annmarie and I definitely sang Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat together for a while before getting into the pod recording.

Annemarie: How could you not?

Rebecca: How could you not?

Annemarie: Especially when we get dreams, like actual dreams in this text.

Rebecca: We do, we get the, the gap here, which is the interesting part about this perpicope, isn't it?

Annemarie: It sure is. Uh, I, again, these, sometimes the gaps, uh, uh, confuse me because the, what's missing is something that I, at least for me as a preacher, would really want as part of that lectionary text, because in this particular case, Joseph's dreams and the two of them especially, are really important to understand why his brothers go from just hating him, because dad loves him to wanting to, to kill him. Thank goodness for Ruben. I guess, uh, I'm still not sure if I wanna say that out loud. Uh, we'll get to that. But, um, you really miss contextually why his brothers, like, what sends them over the edge. Right? What's the tipping point for them? It's not just that his father favors them. I think culturally, that's something that you could expect from this kind of family, especially with this many brothers, uh, and a culture where, you know, you, you're all kind of vying for, for, uh, a place in the family, a place in the, the work, uh, that you're doing and trying to find favor with this one who obviously has found favor with God as his name has changed, and, um, the one who wrestled and hurt his hip and stuff.

Um, but to not have these conversations, right? These very important dialogues between Joseph and his brothers, and then Joseph and his father. You even get this glimpse into a strain in their relationship that leads you to what happens next. Um, I just don't quite understand why we wouldn't just read all of this.

Rebecca: I don't really get it either. I mean, they even refer to the dreams and they call Joseph the Dreamer in verses 19 and 20. Um, and it kind of feels like leaving out the dreams themselves expects a certain level of biblical literacy that I don't know that we should always try to rely on, especially nowadays. Like, no, maybe there's just this assumption that like, oh, everyone already knows the story of Joseph or whatever. Everyone has seen the Andrew Lloyd Weber musical. Um, but it, yeah, it's, it's a strange choice. It's, it's a strange choice, um, to, to take that out and, and just kind of have the surrounding pieces here.

Annemarie: And it's not even very long. It's not as if, I mean, he has longer dreams, he has longer explanations of his dreams in Genesis, and these are just two really short ones.

Rebecca: Yeah. It's, it's just a handful of, of verses here. Um, the thing that I kind of found myself pondering while I was reading it all as a whole, um, and especially the way that keeping the, the dreams, and it's not just the dreams, right? It's the fact that he, it, at least in the way the narrative is constructed, like the way he's like sharing them with his brothers and like telling them about it, which you kind of wanna be like, do Joseph just like keep it under wraps? Like, why would you, why would you do that? He kind of--

Annemarie: Read the room.

Rebecca: Read the room. Exactly. Um, like it is kind of hard to deny that he is goading his brothers, or it's just, you know, we don't get tone. We don't get things like tone or inner, inner thoughts in scripture. That's just not the way they wrote in antiquity. Um, but it's easy to see how he isn't making it any easier for anyone. Um, and what I found myself thinking about was, even when that's true, he still doesn't deserve what they do to him, right? A,

a fraught sibling relationship or any kind of fraught relationship or any kind of behavior that is less than, you know, friendly or kind on first experience doesn't justify the kind of violence that's done to him. And maybe this is a stretch, I don't know, but it just, it just felt like a little bit of a moment to question, um, the way we assign blame to people for the bad things that happen where it's like, oh, well, what were you wearing?

Or like, what did you really say to get them going? Or any of these kinds of other questions. Um, where having this story as a whole, including Joseph's exchange with his brothers and telling them about the dreams, kind of undermines that and, and seems to, um, reinforce the fact that you, it's, it's still not justified <laugh> to do violence to people, even if, um, they, they made you mad <laugh> or they disappointed you or they hurt your feelings or something like that. Um, so like I said, I don't know if that's a, a stretch or kind of, um, or anything else, but that I, I was hearing that in, in the story this time. I read it through.

Annemarie: No, I don't think that's a stretch at all. Um, I, I do think there is this, this, uh, reality in this time period where it's possible his brothers see him as a threat to their inheritance or a threat to their own place, and their father's, you know, uh, eyes at the same time, uh, you know, at, they also see him as he's way more valuable to us if we just sell 'em then as a brother, right? I mean, uh, I, I see how, you know, I'm an oldest sibling. I understand when my younger sibling gets on my nerves and does things to make me crazy <laugh>, but I, I have never put him in a pit <laugh>.

I have not, but, and I don't think that that's, I mean, obviously this is an extreme example, right? And if you know the story of Joseph, you know that there is definitely more to come. Joseph's dreams mean something. Uh, and, you know, his inability to read the room is, is unfortunate. Uh, his inability to see his brothers as, um, valuable and, uh, wanting to be validated the way that he gets validated by his father, um, instead of being told that they're gonna worship at his feet, um, is, is definitely something to, to note in this. Um, but I also think that it, it does tell us a lot about biblical, uh, families and this time period of families are also, um, how you, your, what, what they determine your future. Um, they determine your stability and your, um, your family future. And I'm not saying that that justifies any of the actions that the brothers take, but I can see where if this is happening enough that they are just seeing this as threat to their own livelihoods. Um, and yeah, I, I just, I can see that happening.

Rebecca: Oh, sure. I think that's definitely a part of their motivation. I, I don't think it's just hurt feelings. I think it's, um, uh, a strategic move to, um, kind of remove the, and, and this is, this is already a kind of stepping outside of it and thinking about it from a storyteller's perspective and the editor's perspective and everything. We know that younger brothers or youngest brothers often have a way of, um, getting the better deal in the end of things. Um, so this is another example of that motif that happens over and over and over and over and over and over again in scripture. I thought it was interesting that there's no direct reference to God in this passage. Um, I, I don't, I, there isn't necessarily always one, but I feel like most of the time there is in one way or another. Um, so it just kind of stood out to me that, um, unless you kind of look at Israel's name as an oblique reference, um, if you're kind of hearing it in the original language or translating it directly or something, um, that God isn't mentioned directly, even though he shows up later in Joseph's story frequently and speaks there.

Uh, but I just wondered how that made this particular passage sound and, and how we can think about, well, even if, you know, we don't have spoken lines from God, where is, where is God in there? I think that's a question we often ask ourselves when we find our, um, own lives to be full of betrayal or, um, disappointment or broken families. We're asking where is God? And I, I felt like the passage prompted that for me.

Annemarie: Especially in a passage and a gap where we have reference to worship someone other than God, um, that the, the dreams all point to Joseph.

Rebecca: Mm-hmm. <affirmative>

Annemarie: They don't point to God, uh, and that the brothers, you have to wonder if the incredulousness that I read into the brother's response has to, and that was my own, you know, read in there. That was my own tone I put on there. Um, might have something to do with, what do you mean I'm gonna worship you? I worship God. Um, how would we bow down to you when you are not, you are not God. Um, and you're the only dad has ever talked to God. We know how that ended. So, uh, you as a new name and might need a new hip. Uh, but, um, I think in the Old Testament especially, and in Genesis and some of the stories that are most well known to us, like Joseph, um, we, and I think the rest of the story of Joseph probably has a similar theme going through it as well, which is, it's a very light touch on God and God's presence in the midst of this.

Right. It's a very light touch on, on that, and more about the ways that, that Jake, that Joseph is, is being used as a conduit to communicate, um, to the Pharaoh, to, um, his brothers, the, the forgiveness, the, you know, there's, there's all these, these things that are gonna happen to Joseph. And we know that Joseph is significant because of his, his parentage and because of the way that his, uh, these lines are gonna continue through, um, the rest of scripture and the rest of, of genealogies and, and lineages that are gonna go forward. Um, but I, I think in, in the Old Testament, we, we often are looking for, well, I think a lot of our, our heroes and and people in the pews maybe be thinking, oh, well, this is when God is mad, right? This is when God is, is vengeful, or this is the Old Testament God.

And so we, we make this assumption that an Old Testament God is one of judgment and law. Um, whereas in this moment, we don't really have a lot of God speaking into this at anything. And maybe that's a, that's something to, to say and say, maybe this is time for us just to listen to what this story is telling us about the human condition and about what it is that humans do to each other. And we just have to keep reading. We just have to keep listening. God is, is doing something that is still to be yet to be determined, yet to be seen, um, through these people. Right? We know that God is with Israel. We know that God is with these, these brothers, right? Um, if you know the names of all these brothers, these 12 brothers, you will know that they also, they have significance later on in, in Genesis. Um, so this is not the last time we're gonna see them. And these stories are really important to kind of see how God uses really human <laugh>, uh, situations and people to bring about the kingdom.

Rebecca: I wonder if there's even space in that approach to the story, um, to begin to make connections to the gospel reading for the weekend where we have the disciples caught in this storm on the water, and Jesus walking on the water and coming to them in that

storm. Um, it's, it's kind of almost like an, an answer to that absence or that silence where, um, if, if we take storm metaphorically, or as a theme, which I've done when I've preached, preached that gospel passage and everything, we just kind of think about storms as these moments in our lives where everything is chaos or in danger or, um, clouded and unclear. Um, I mean, I think it's fair to extend that metaphor to what Joseph is going through, and we can kind of say, make that link and then say, the promise is that God's presence is with us in the storms, right?

Even if, um, there doesn't happen to be a verse that says, and God said everything will be okay, Joseph in the middle in there somewhere, um, we know that that is indeed, um, that we are indeed promised God's presence and comfort and, and grace through whatever we end up facing. Um, so I think that, uh, if, if preaching Old Testament texts isn't something we do very often, or if we just wanna kind of make it part of a sermon that mostly focuses on the, the gospel, um, from Matthew, that there, there's definitely ways to, to link these two stories at least, or maybe even use, um, if you're not even on the Semicon continuous series or something to be able to mention other stories from salvation history, um, kind of like, uh, you know, like a table prayer or a Thanksgiving for baptism or something, um, would be able to do that.

Annemarie: And what I find, especially about these semicontinuous readings, 'cause we're gonna talk about the Psalm also in this, in this time together, is that the psalm that we're gonna talk about does bring up Joseph, um, and does reference the rest of Joseph's story in a way that that brings about, and kind of brings that God piece into it in bringing some interpretation to Joseph's story and to what it is that Joseph is able to do because of God's god's own hand on Joseph's life, which is what the psalm is, the psalmist is, is assigning. Um, but I think it's interesting that these two texts are gonna speak to each other in this way and then inform, help us, uh, help inform what we could get out of the gospel as well.

Music: <piano music>

Rebecca: The psalm for the semi-continuous series of readings for the eleventh Sunday after Pentecost in Year A is Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b...

Annemarie: ...meaning the gap that we are exploring is Psalm 105, verses seven to 15. I'll be reading the assigned verses...

Rebecca: ...and I'll be reading the verses that are left out of the lectionary.

Annemarie: O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgements he has uttered, O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

Rebecca: He is the Lord our God; his judgements are in all the earth. He is mindful of his covenant for ever, of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac, which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan

as your portion for an inheritance.' When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people, he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account, saying, 'Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm.'

Annemarie: When he summoned famine against the land, and broke every staff of bread, he had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave. His feet were hurt with fetters, his neck was put in a collar of iron; until what he had said came to pass, the word of the Lord kept testing him. The king sent and released him; the ruler of the peoples set him free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possessions, to instruct his officials at his pleasure, and to teach his elders wisdom. Praise the Lord!

Music: <piano music>

Rebecca: So, yes, technically that tag of verse 45b kind of makes another gap, but I am not bothering with that little half phrase <laugh>.

Annemarie: I actually, so I can say a little bit about this too. So I get a kick out of reading, um, older commentaries and figuring out, um, what they say. So I am a big fan, especially for the Old Testament texts of using the new revised, uh, the new Jerome Biblical commentary. And it's a bunch of, it's a collective of, of different, uh, writers and theologians that have, uh, done the work for this. But when they talk about Psalm 105, they say that really it's a psalm that's, that's an even split in two halves. And so they have 22 verses, and then you have kind of a hinge, they call the verse 23 is actually a hinge verse. And then you have the second 22 verses. And so that, that 45b actually is, I think you don't have to have that second half of 22 verses because, and that 45b just, just kind of ends the whole thing. 22 is also the number of letters in the alphabet that they're talking, they're using. And, um, so that 22 is a significant number that way. So, um, no, when I saw that we weren't gonna read the second half of the psalm even before 45b, it occurred to me that that's really one of those, um, it's, it's more like a, it it's almost the ah, amen. Right at the end of the--

Rebecca: Exactly, yes.

Annemarie: --Of the, of the verse. Yeah.

Rebecca: I was just making a funny look at you bringing a context and the history. Thank you.

Annemarie: I am serious and intense all the time. <laugh>

Rebecca: No, you're, that isn't true. But I did genuinely appreciate that context and that, um, analysis. Is that, did it mention if, um, uh, you were talking about how, uh, 22 is the numbers of the number of letters in the alphabet, and that's where we were going with this perpe. Um, did it mention if it's an acrostic poem in the original language, didn't they do that for some of the psalms? They started each line with the next letter of the alphabet?

Annemarie: Uh, I believe that that is, I didn't see that that was actually, uh, something that was part of this psalm, but that still could be true. Okay. Um, and it's hard to know in English

when we see the translation. Of course. Um, uh, if I had my, he I could get my Hebrew out, but I feel like that would take longer. And we don't have a ton of time.

Rebecca: Don't worry about it. I didn't know if you just remembered if it like happens--

Annemarie: You're better at Hebrew than me. So--

Rebecca: --mention it in that way. No, no Greek ,sure. Hebrew absolutely not.

Annemarie: I think we're equally bad at Hebrew.

Rebecca: Okay. Yeah. I think I'm sorry, KPA.

Annemarie: We could get a Hebrew scholar here and tell us. I'm sorry. Dr. Hugh Weiler.

Rebecca: So what do we have in this psalm gap?

Annemarie: We have, uh, a reminder of covenant and promises and protection and favor, uh, that comes from God. We have, uh, this, it's really the, the meat of, again, we have these gaps that I think are, are really important to the whole context of the, what we're trying to read, right? We said that all 22 verses are important for, uh, this half of Psalm 105. And, uh, this piece is really about the, it's, I think it's the glue right, that holds it together. It's this, that's where God's people act from. That's where the source of, uh, uh, collective strength and, um, faith in a world and a time that is so scary and so uncertain that they have this covenant that God continues to make with God's people, even when God's people fail to hold up their end of that bargain, of that covenant, of that agreement, um, that this covenant is continually being made and it is being made generationally so that when we talk about generational, uh, the faith of generations and the faith of a God who is not just for one person, right?

That this God has been present and active and salvific through generations, not just with one, not just with Abraham, but Isaac and Jacob and all of the people to come. Um, that's, I think the, at least part of what this gap is doing right, is reminding us of God's presence. And again, gives us that sense of it. It inserts itself into Genesis almost to say this story of Joseph, because that second half of the, the, the part after the gap is about Joseph, that all of this was part of what God was doing is part of this covenant.

Rebecca: It's almost a reminder. Well, it's got a lot of tension. I feel a lot of tension with the, the Joseph story. I think that the piece, um, that gets left out the gap versus, um, really build that contrast for me, um, that that is just kind of present in, in life and especially a life of faith where you have these, these promises, um, and this grace and this covenant, um, and then, uh, the reality that that doesn't necessarily mean, uh, a life of ease or that everything always our way and all and all of that. Um, because when you go through the story of Joseph in the, not graphic, but graphic way that the psalm does with this, um, really physical imagery of bondage, um, I think it for me emphasizes that, um, that tension bet between those two things. Um, but, but I think it also invites a reminder, um, that, like you were saying, this covenant, um, being handed down generationally and carried on and shared, um, I think there's a way to read the Joseph story, and let's be real, most of Genesis as a story of generational trauma and generational conflict, um,

where the dysfunction, um, or dishonesty of previous generations continues to impact future generations, because that's what generational trauma does.

Um, but I, I wonder if there's a way to hear this gap from the psalm of a promise that for as much as we struggle with the impact of, um, what is coming from our parents and our ancestors, um, that good things can be passed on and shared as well, that when we try to break cycles of trauma, um, that has an impact not just for the immediate generation, but for those who will come when we try to care for the earth and, um, remedy the exploitation that we are making of the planet, that that will have an impact and a blessing and make a covenant of its own kind with generations to come. Um, so I, I, I heard just echoes of that common theme about, um, long lasting impact we're back to long lasting impact again. Um, which I think might have been something we were talking about for our Patreon exclusive, uh, episode, um, where we talk about the Barbie movie, um, but this long lasting impact of, um, what it means to both experience trauma but then overcome trauma.

Annemarie: I completely agree. And I, you said just in Genesis, and I'm thinking to myself, oh, right, and then Exodus and person, second King, spark and second Samuel, you know, like Joshua Judges, I mean, the whole Gold Testament is really just generational trauma and not, and then the, the repercussions of that over and over again, right? I'm thinking about David and Solomon and, you know, all those things. Um, and I think that there's, I think there's so much relatability to that in our own lives that, um, we, we can see happening maybe not in the same kind of ways, maybe not as visceral or violent or, you know, so many thousands of deaths all the time. Uh, but we can, we can relate to this feeling of, of those who have come before me, have set up, set out this path, you know, for, for where I am to go.

And the path ahead of me is different than it was for them, you know, when they were in the same place in their lives and at the same time, they are, they were no less. And I am no less connected to a God who has made promises to me as they were to the same God who made promises to them. Uh, and that, that moving forward and that that that life we live in the midst of those promises might look different, and it might be interpreted even differently. And it might be something that changes the way that we see the world or the way that we interact with the world. But it doesn't mean that what was happening before us was somehow, um, not connected to a life of faith and a life that was connected to a God through baptism and communion and, and all those, those really visceral ways that we find ourselves connected to the divine and to that covenant that God makes with us, for us, on our behalf.

Um, because that same covenant that God makes later, right, that we hear in in Jeremiah, um, and even in, in Jesus is one of those covenants that goes, that in all encompasses all of the generations that have come before, and that will come after, uh, and I think in, in this section, in this gap, we're, we're getting that, that, you know, we have that, it even says that everlasting covenant, right? Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. So we talk about the everlasting, you know, kind of, uh, uh, way that this is, is gonna be for us. We are still part of that everlasting covenant that, that remnant that is still clinging to this life of faith. Um, but that those same promises for a thousand generations, right? The covenant made with Abraham and sworn to Isaac, confirmed to Jacob, um, to Israel as an everlasting covenant. Um, you know, those, that's that reminder of those

generational connections that the people of Israel constantly get that kind of, it's almost like, um, uh, uh, a key word <laugh>, right?

It's almost like it, uh, something that we, we hear. And, um, it connects all of a sudden all of those synapses that, that have been kind of out there and kind of connects all the dots and says, oh, this is about that covenant. This is about that promise that God has made for generations. And now I know that this is about me, and this is about where, where I stand. And that Joseph in his suffering and in his, you know, uh, really difficult time, uh, before he became powerful and was able to demonstrate to his own family and, and, you know, save their lives from a famine, um, that there was something about this promise that was even alive at that time.

Rebecca: And I like the way it, the, these listings of genealogies and the, the repetition of, um, reminders about connection to God kind of funnel down closer and closer. And I know even for the writers of Psalms, Joseph wouldn't have been contemporary, and Joseph certainly isn't contemporary for us, but I wonder if it can encourage us to do some of the, some of that funneling and that drawing closer, like even, even to us and to, to here and now. What would it mean for us to, um, name our ancestors and faith? I mean, these are some of the things we, we try to do on all Saint Sunday, or, um, I know that those of us that are, um, ordained ministers had to do throughout candidacy and other times, whether it's, um, you know, building our, um, oh, what's the name for the family maps?

Annemarie: Genealogy.

Rebecca: Gen, not, not a...

Annemarie: Genealogy, no, genogram.

Rebecca: Genogram!

Annemarie: Yes, I remember!

Rebecca: Genograms. I can, oh, I should have had that word, um, closer to <laugh>, the tip of my tongue building genograms and everything else. Um, but, but what that does is ask us to look at where we came from and how it impacts us, but then also to look at me today, um, and where is God? Where is my connection to God? How am I, um, experiencing God's promises in my life? Um, and we're not very, I don't think we're very good at doing that, um, at remembering to, um, let God be alive in that way in our, in our world, around us. I kept coming back to verse seven, um, in the gap when I was reading it. He is the Lord our God, his judgments are in all the earth. Um, and I just kept thinking about what it would mean to really see God's judgments, which isn't a negative word here.

It's not like condemnation. It's his, um, God's guidance and God's word and God's covenant. Um, being in all the earth, being able to see and hear and smell and taste it like everywhere we look around us, um, was a really poignant way to think about that. It was really poetic. It stood out to me as, um, the, the kind of particular calling for me from, from this psalm. Um, the thing that would stick with me after Sunday, um, the encouragement to find the sacredness, um, in my life, in creation all around me. Um, and I think that that's a, a piece of what this cap can do for us and for our people. Well,

Annemarie: I completely agree, and I think that in, in concert with the Genesis reading, and I just, it's always good to remember that Psalms, um, they are really kind of a, a, a one note kind of touchstone in, in one moment in time, right? They, they're unique that way, and that they're not telling a complete story from chapter to chapter, right. From Psalm to Psalm. And that when we have, uh, a psalm like this that is, uh, uh, so specific and at the same time, so broad, right? It's both. And, um, that in concert with that genesis reading, I really think it, it brings about, uh, of feeling, of, of connectedness that we don't always get to mm-hmm. <affirmative>, some of those, those Old Testament readings, um, and those Old Testament people. Mm-hmm. Because the Old Testament is filled with people mm-hmm. <affirmative> and God's people, and the way in which God is present with those people in very human circumstances and very human experiences that God enters into.

Um, and that reminds us that God, like you said, right, uh, judgments are in all the earth. That, that our very human experiences and very human circumstances are not without God's presence. And that if, if Joseph, in his very extreme experience, <laugh> can be something where God is present and God has been, you know, uh, able to bring about God's will, um, we can be that too. And at the same time, remembering that our will is not God's, and that if we are suffering, if we are in a place where it feels as if God is far away or God is not caring about us, or even, uh, in an extreme situation, that God is against us, um, that those are our real feelings, those are our real experiences. And for as much as, as we can doubt, and we can kind of blame and shout and, and be really angry with a God who's supposed to bring us goodness, um, I, I hope that we also can hear that because God is with Joseph in the pit, because God is with Joseph in his slavery and his shackles in the way that God is with Joseph, as he experiences, uh, all of the changes and chances of his life that God is, is no less with us in those pits, in those shackles, metaphorically speaking, uh, or even directly speaking, uh, and that, that this, that's where I think you might get some gospel, right?

We might get some, some of that promise and some of that hope for us. Um, and that can be really hard to wrap our minds around. That can be really tough, and we can do tough things and we can do it together, right? Joseph doesn't find himself at the top, uh, with, you know, power all because of only his own actions, right? There, there is, there are people seeing him along the way and listening to what he says. And, you know, he's interpreting dreams and he's, he's seeing and helping people. He's constantly trying to help people in the midst of famine, in the midst of all those things. Um, and it's, it's about the whole community. God is using all of the people around Joseph, uh, to bring in where he's supposed to be.

Music: <outro music>

Rebecca: Thank you so much for listening to our conversation this week. We hope that by minding the gap, you heard something that gave you a new insight, appreciation, or question about scripture.

Annemarie: Now, your job is to find us @MindtheGapRCL on Instagram. Visit our website, mindthegaprcl.com, and if you really love us, support us using Ko-fi or Patreon. Share us with all your friends and colleagues.

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Rebecca: Blessings on your preaching friends. And may the word of God dwell in you richly.