

“JOSEPH”

Text: Genesis 37:1-28
Subject: How Forgiveness Obtains Heaven’s Attention

Introduction

- Fact:** Joseph was let down by someone he loved.
- Fact:** Joseph was mistreated by someone he trusted.
- Fact:** Joseph was forgotten by someone he served.
- Fact:** Joseph experienced a “boatload” of growth opportunities.

(Challenges That Joseph Overcame)

I. Joseph Was Betrayed By His Brothers:

“Now Israel (Joseph’s Dad) loved Joseph and made him a coat of many colors. (37:3)

“And when his brethren saw this, they hated Joseph and sought to slay him. (vs. 4, 18)

Fact: The coat of Joseph was to mark him out as the one to whom Jacob intended to bequeath rulership of the clan.

Fact: The coat was supposed to go to the firstborn, (Reuben), but he had committed fornication with his father’s concubine.

Fact: Reuben was the firstborn of Leah, and Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel (because of Reuben’s sin, the birthright was transferred to Joseph).

Fact: Joseph’s dreams were of future position and power (dreams that caused envy and jealousy in his brothers).

Fact: The result? Joseph was betrayed and put into a pit (while his brothers sat down to eat and celebrate). (37:25)

Question: What is envy?

Answer: Wanting what someone else has.

Question: What will envy cause someone to do?

#1. It will cause you to not be content with what you have.

#2. It will cause you to attempt to get what you envy in an unlawful way.

II. Joseph Was Enslaved By The Ishmaelites

“Then there passed by Midianite merchantmen; and they drew and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver”. (v. 28)

Fact: Joseph is purchased for the price of a crippled slave.

Fact: Joseph is then sold again to an officer of Pharaoh’s court. (into Egypt) 37:26)

Fact: Joseph now finds himself in a foreign country, a foreign culture and a foreign household.

Fact: And Joseph will reveal to us that betrayal, injustice and even slavery cannot thwart God’s ultimate plan for your life. (Psalm 76:10) – “The wrath (anger) of man will praise His name”.

III. Joseph Was Tempted By The Devil

“And it came to pass that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph, and she said, lie with me”. (39:7)

Fact: Joseph was overseer of all that Potiphar owned.

Fact: Joseph was respected and trusted by Potiphar.

Fact: Joseph was the chief of the military force, employed as the royal bodyguard in the court precincts.

Then The Unexpected Bombshell (Joseph's Temptation)

- #1. It was totally unexpected (when all was going well).
- #2. It was from an unexpected source (while Joseph was serving).
- #3. It was continually persistent (Mrs. Potiphar didn't quit, v. 10).
- #4. It was offered secretly ("there was none within the house" v. 11).
- #5. It was temporarily profitable (to get in good standing with his boss).

Elements To Joseph's Victory When Tempted:

- #1. Joseph was loyal to God (39:9) "How can I..."
- #2. Joseph was shocked by sin (39:9) "Great wickedness"
- #3. Joseph was habitually prepared (39:3) (41:38) "The Spirit of God"

IV. Joseph Was Falsely Accused By Potiphar's Wife

"The Hebrew servant which you brought here tried to rape me" (39:17-19)

Fact: Joseph was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife.

Fact: Joseph was misunderstood by Potiphar.

Fact: Joseph was helpless to defend himself.

Fact: Joseph now suffers wrongfully for doing right.

Question: What does God say about "doing well" and "suffering for it"?

Answer: (I Peter 2:19-25)

1. God is well pleased
2. It happened to Jesus
3. It's part of the cross

V. Joseph Was Imprisoned By Potiphar

"And Joseph's master took him and put him into prison...but the Lord was with Joseph. (39:20-21)

Fact: Joseph has now experienced inflammation, injustice and incarceration.

Fact: Joseph has also experienced inspiration; "But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy and favor". (v. 21)

(How Can We Prosper In Adversity?)

- #1. Don't be surprised when injustices occur. (I Peter 4:12) – Its part of the cross life for believers.
- #2. Don't give in to bitterness and self pity. (Hebrews 12:15) – This will lead to spiritual suicide.
- #3. Don't forget to be future minded. (Hebrews 12:11) – God will use adversity to grow more fruit.
- #4. Don't cease your communion with Jesus. (Luke 18:1) – So that grace will continue to flow to you.
- #5. Don't forget that every adversity is seasonal (I Peter 1:6) – You are going through it, and will come out with a testimony.

VI. Joseph Was Forgotten By The Butler

"Don't forget me when you get out, I've done nothing wrong to be here...yet the butler forgot Joseph" (40:14, 15, 23).

Fact: Joseph's hopes had been aroused after he interpreted the butler's dream.

Fact: Joseph was sure that the butler would get him released from jail.

Fact: But Joseph was forgotten and had his hopes deferred.

(Yet Joseph Thrived In Prison)

"Joseph served the prisoners in the ward" (40:4) (Why?)

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- A. Because lengthy afflictions need not discourage you.
 - ◆ Joseph overcame personal disappointments to serve those in need.
- B. Because bad memories need not defeat you.
 - ◆ Joseph was able to “get over” the sting of his past to fulfill God’s will for his life.

VII. Joseph Was Ignored By Pharaoh

“And it came to pass after two full years” (41:1)

Fact: Joseph was neglected, put “on hold”, waited for his release, yet never soured in prison.

(Remember when your hopes and plans are put “On Hold”

This will keep you from a martyr’s complex!

- #1. God’s grace is always sufficient. (II Corinthians 12:9)
- #2. God’s way is always perfect. (Psalm 18:30)
- #3. God’s timing is always right. (Ecclesiastes 3:11)
- #4. God’s plan is always completed. (Psalm 138:8)

(How Did God Get Joseph Out Of Prison?)

- ◆ The King had dreams, distress and disappointments. (41:1-8)

(And, Oh The Providence Of God)

- ◆ The butler tells Pharaoh about a friend in prison. (41:12)
- ◆ Pharaoh calls for Joseph to stand before him. (41:14)
- ◆ Joseph interprets the dream and is promoted. (41:38-40) (and)
- ◆ Joseph saves the nation in famine, spares his brothers who sold him out and shows us how to “Trust the Lord”.

Life Application

- #1. God is always in charge of those in charge over you!
- #2. God can always work in spite of your circumstances.
- #3. God will always honor your integrity and honesty.
- #4. God will always vindicate His truth that you stand for.
- #5. God is never taken off guard by what surprises you!
- #6. God can never forget you when you experience those divine delays in life.
- #7. God will most definitely honor you when you forgive those who trespass against you!

Question: What is forgiveness?

Answer: It is the cancellation of a debt as if it never existed.

Question: Why is forgiveness so important?

Answer: Because forgiveness is the key that unlocks the handcuffs of anger and the door of resentment.

Question: What happens inside of someone who chooses not to forgive?

Answer: A work initiated by satan that is **deceptive** and **destructive**:

“Then said Jesus unto His disciples, it is impossible but that **offenses** will come”. (Luke 17:1)

Fact: The Greek word for “**Offend**” in Luke 17:1 comes from the word (**SKANDALON**).

Fact: The word (**SKANDALON**) refers to the part of a hunter’s trap where bait is attached.

Fact: The word refers to the laying of a trap in someone's way by satan, (a trap used to bring people into captivity).

(In Other Words)

- ◆ Offenses are tools of satan to bring people into bondage who respond the wrong way.
- ◆ Offenses are tools of satan to sever relationships and destroy your God given potential.

Question: What do offenses do (how do they work?)

Answer: They are negative in their affect (always):

#1. **Offenses infect us** (Matthew 24:10)

- ◆ They contaminate the heart and pollute the spirit.
- ◆ They infect us with anger, bitterness and envy.

#2. **Offenses imprison us** (Proverbs 18:19)

- ◆ They build walls around our hearts and deny us access to other people.
- ◆ They isolate us for risk of being hurt again.

#3. **Offenses inhibit us** (James 1:20)

- ◆ They produce anger that doesn't allow God's grace to conform us into His image.
- ◆ They constrict our openness to God and others, thus closing up our spirit.

Question: Why do millions sit in church hindered in their worship and relationships.

Question: Why do millions run from church to church at the least offense?

- ◆ ...Because pride won't allow us to deal with our own flaws (only everybody else's).
- ◆ ...Because pride keeps us from dealing with the truth.
- ◆ ...Because pride views itself as a victim and places the focus on the offender.
- ◆ ...Because pride says "It's your fault I'm mad, you did this to me, you hurt me and you're the reason I am like I am".

(In Other Words)

- ◆ Pride gives us permission to hold on to an offense, (satan's deception) and as long as we blame someone else for what's inside of us we can't be changed and healed. (Satan's destruction).

(Oh Beloved, Let's Be Like Joseph And Remember:)

- #1. That offenses are tools of satan to detract you from God's will.
- #2. That offenses are opportunities to let God render judgment where it is due.
- #3. That offenses are faith producers as you commit your ways to the Lord in absolute trust.
- #4. That offenses are reminders of what we actually did to Jesus.

(Engraft, Memorize And Incorporate)

- ◆ "Say not thou I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee". (Proverbs 20:22)
- ◆ "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression". (Proverbs 19:11)
- ◆ "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath, for vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord". (Romans 12:19)
- ◆ "He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made". (Psalm 7:15)
- ◆ Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me, I will render to the man according to his work". (Proverbs 24:29)
- ◆ "They that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, but I as a deaf man heard not, and like a dumb man, I opened not my mouth". (Psalm 38:12, 13)

AMEN!