

The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture

Week 6: Joseph's Job Promotion

Scripture:

Genesis 41:37-57

Motivation (Why You Need This):

Where are we in Joseph's story?

- Joseph was hated by his brothers – favoritism by his father, coat, dreams
- Joseph was forsaken by his brothers and sold into slavery (ended up as the overseer of Potiphar's house in Egypt)
- Joseph was falsely accused of rape by Potiphar's wife

When we left off last week, we concluded that **Joseph kept doing the right thing even when things went *from good to bad to worse***. Why? He trusted that God knew what He was doing and knows the bigger picture.

Daily steps in the right direction doesn't always mean immediate deliverance. Sometimes disappointment precedes deliverance.

Information (What You Need to Know):

Joseph's Unsolicited Advice from God

Genesis 41:33-36 (ESV) 33 Now therefore let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. **34** Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years. **35** And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. **36** That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine.”

Joseph from Prisoner to Prime Minister

Genesis 41:37-45 (ESV) This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. **38** And Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?” **39** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. **40** You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you.” **41** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.”

In no way was Joseph asking for or looking for this position. He was just obeying and following what God led him to do.

Joseph attributed everything (beginning, middle, and end) to God.

Pharaoh attributes two key characteristics to Joseph:

Discerning - Discernment is seeing the consequences of today's choices through the lense of God's truth - and having the courage to act on it.

This is not pure intelligence, education, street smarts or gut instinct. It does not say, “what does this mean?” Discernment asks, “what should be done now?”

EXAMPLE: Anyone can say, “Look, a snake!” Discernment says, “don't move or slowly back away - that snake is poisonous and can kill.”

Joseph has the God-given discernment to say the famine is coming. These are the steps we should take to prepare. **DISCERNMENT DIAGNOSES**

Wise - Wisdom is the God-given ability to live skillfully in God's world according to God's truth (and ways).

Proverbs teaches us that wisdom comes from God and begins with the Fear of God - **Proverbs 9:10**

Wisdom is not intelligence, education, experience, age, or common sense (highly lacking today). It is not found in the cultural consensus or a person's preference.

Wisdom is knowing what honors God and choosing it - especially when it costs you. WISDOM PRESCRIBES

EXAMPLE: A child says, "why can't I?" (have that, go there, do that, get that) and Good Parent can respond with, "because I see what you cannot." (consequences, results, the ramifications)

These attributes took Joseph from Slave to in charge of Potiphar's House, Prisoner to Overseeing the Prison, Prison to Prime Minister.

Joseph's Transformation

Does this story remind you of any other situations found in the Bible?
Moses or Daniel

42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. **43** And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. **44** Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." **45** And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

The Transformation:

Ring - The Egyptian equivalent of the Amex Black Card or The Centurion Card - Show of Power and Authority

Clothing - From Rags to Riches - Prison Garb for the Finest Linen fitted Clothing - Dressed the Part

Gold Chain - Bling showing he was a man of the highest distinction and nobility

Chariot - Pharaoh's extra sports car - He likely had a Quadriga Chariot - Four horse power.

Entourage - He had men who would go before him to clear the streets (Make way) and the way and order people to "Bow Before Him".

Name - Zaf-enath-paneah - "God Speaks and he lives"

Wife - A wife is provided to Joseph - Named Asen-eth the daughter of a Priest of On (Heliopolis) a high ranking religious leader which was the center of the sun god (Ra) worship.

Status - To marry a daughter like Asenath you would have to be of High Ranking Nobility and Status in Egypt. So being married to her opened all the doors of nobility and status to Joseph

Speak, live, appear, act, work like and Egyptian. Did that change who Joseph was?

God Leads and Blesses Joseph

Genesis 39:23 - Continues - God is with Joseph

Genesis 41:46-49 (ESV) Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. **47** During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, **48** and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around

it. **49** And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.

Listen to Stephen in Acts 7

Acts 7:9-10 (ESV) “And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him **10** and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household.

Joseph’s story has encouraged and transformed people for centuries!

Did Joseph stay faithful to God? The the outward transformation transform him internally?

Joseph’s Family

Genesis 41:50-52 (ESV) Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore them to him. **51** Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. “For,” he said, “God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house.” **52** The name of the second he called Ephraim, “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.”

Joseph chooses Hebrew Names. An ancient narrative written over 2,000 years ago tells the story of Joseph and Asenath. It describes how Asenath the once sun worshiper turns her heart and affections to Yahweh the One True God.

Manasseh - God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house. Showing Joseph has found peace and release of all that he had endured. **God made him forget.**

Ephriam - God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction. Showing that Joseph fully acknowledged God for his perfect work and faithfulness. **God made him fruitful.**

Yes, Joseph can remember those tragic events but now they are in light of God's greater/larger good work. His wounds remain and can never be forgotten but God incorporated those wounds/scars into the intricate work of God's grace in his life.

With these names Joseph doesn't erase the past but views his life through God's lenses.

Notice that Egypt will always be the land of affliction. Because Joseph know home will always be the land of Promise (Canaan).

Plenty Turns to Famine

Genesis 41:53-55 (ESV) The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end, **54** and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. **55** When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do."

Notice that word, BREAD. People came to Joseph because they were hungry and in need of Bread to sustain them. It points to the one who would one day come and make a powerful statement.

IN John 6 he feeds thousands (5000 men). He crosses the sea of Galilee and the people pursue him. This is one of the 7 I AM statements in the book of John.

John 6:35 (ESV) - Jesus says, I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

We come to Jesus because we are hungry for God's truth. And we find that Jesus fulfills and sustains us.

-The bread of Egypt saved people from Famine

-The bread of heaven saves sinners from eternal separation from God

A Seed of Abraham Blesses the World

Genesis 41:56-57 (ESV) So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. **57** Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

Application (What You Need to Do):

Joseph was given a new name, new clothes, and a new authority—but he never took on a new God.

Pharaoh changed Joseph's position, but he could not change Joseph's identity.

Success did not secularize Joseph. Promotion did not replace his faith.

Joseph didn't forget where he came from—he remembered who carried him through.

God may place you and I wherever he want/does but he will never release his claim on us. We are his inheritance his chosen special possession. His claim on you and I is not based on our performance but on His Love, and His Unchanging and Everlasting Character.