

JOSEPH- PROFILE OF COURAGE

Part 4: Courage in Confinement (Ch. 40)

INTRO: Genesis 12-50 (38 chapters) covers the life of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (14 chapters – 37%). Growing up in a badly dysfunctional home could've made Joseph a victim—most would've understood. After all parents were deceivers, mom died when he was 16, hated by his own brothers (thrown in a pit, sold in slavery). Yet, Joseph's display of courage in the face of so much is amazing. Raises the question.

SERIES QUESTION: “How would your outlook on life change if you had the courage to really believe God was with you in every situation?”

When last left Joseph he was second in command in Potiphar's house. Mrs. Potiphar tries to seduce. Joseph refuses (3xs). She cries, “Rape!” Thrown in prison (normally executed), but “the Lord was with him” (vv. 2, 3, 21, 23—Really? To be with somebody else). Many kinds of prisons... Ten years pass—let's resume the story (still going downhill). Two key words in the chapter: faithful but forgotten.

I. THE BUTLER AND THE BAKER IMPRISONED (vv. 1-7)

- A. Their *Responsibilities* — high offices
 - 1. Butler (cupbearer)—Pharaoh's drink-wine steward. Nehemiah for King Artaxerxes (Neh. 1:11; 2:1)
 - 2. Baker—Pharaoh's food (chef)
- B. Their *Offense* (v.1 “offend the king”)—no information on how
- C. Their *Keeper* (vv.3-4)—Joseph was assigned to them (God at work)
- D. Their *Dilemma* (vv. 5-7) — each has a dream which neither understand. Note vv.6-7: No reason to be sad, right? What an attitude for such underserved treatment.

II. THEIR DREAMS INTERPRETED (vv. 8-19)

- A. The BUTLER'S Dream (vv.9-13)—favorable
Joseph's personal request (vv. 14-15)
- B. The BAKER'S Dream (vv.16-19)—unfavorable, predicting his death, more of a nightmare

III. THEIR DREAMS FULFILLED (vv.20-22)

- A. Butler reinstated (vv. 20-21)
- B. Baker executed “hanged” (v.22). He who prepared food became food!

IV. JOSEPH'S EXPECTATION

- A. “Happy Ending”? for the butler
- B. For Joseph (v.23 “forgot him”) v.14—you have to be kidding

LESSONS

1. *Stay hopeful and optimistic* (v.7). Always do what is right and kind. Attitude is critical...
2. *Don't hesitate to help yourself* (vv.14-15) – Does God help those who help themselves or those who trust Him? Yes! unless we are certain God has told us to do nothing
3. *Remain faithful no matter the relationship or the adversity*. Joseph was faithful to his dad, Potiphar, in prison. Stay faithful (Pro. 20:6; 1 Cor. 4:1-2)
4. *Never define God by the circumstances you are in but by His faithfulness in our circumstances*. Let your faith shape your circumstances not the opposite. God does some of His best work in the darkness (Isa. 45:3). Good things can happen...
5. *Stay right when wronged*, Father, brothers, Potiphar's, butler

CONC: But, “the Lord was with Joseph”. Seems impossible. He had the courage to trust God no matter what. What's your situation today? Wonder how to get through? Answer is simple but hard. Take the next step anyone in your situation would take if they really believed God was with them.

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