STUDIES IN GENESIS

CANDY SEALE

LESSON 23 GENESIS 39-41 FROM SLAVE TO PRISON

Joseph is in Egypt. From the outward appearance of things, the question would be, "Why?" Without the privilege of having the rest of the story recorded for us, that would very well be our question if we were in his shoes. In Genesis 37, we see that Joseph is an honest and responsible young man. He is a blessing to his father and one that can be trusted in all that he does. However, the question can be asked, "Will Joseph continue to act this way if taken from his father's house. Will he keep the right attitude when he is being mistreated? Will he resist temptations when he is where no one is looking?"

The truth is that until tests and temptations come our way, we really don't know who we are. Tests must come before the character of a person is truly shown.

Joseph is a man that God has chosen for great things. He is a good kid but he is still a kid that needs to "grow up" in his journey of faith with God. An enormous acceleration in his "discipleship training" is just about to explode as he arrives to his new life in Egypt!

Read Genesis 39. *(Remember, pray before you start. We need the mind of Christ here. Let this not just be an intellectual assignment. Only through God's Spirit can we even begin to understand God and his Word that He chooses to reveal to us. Pray with the Psalmist, "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from your law." Psalm 119:18*

FIRST STOP IN EGYPT

Joseph's first stop in Egypt is to serve as a slave for a very important man named Potiphar. Describe his experience there. (Genesis 39:1-4)

_____

_____

The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered at everything he did. Potiphar was blessed because of Joseph. I might add since Joseph prospered at everything that he did, what did Joseph have? _____

Nothing.

From all outward appearances, Joseph's visible circumstances were not all that encouraging. God was blessing him but he was still just a slave.

And yet in these circumstances, Joseph did the job that he was called to do. There is no hint of whining or complaining. He remained faithful to his master and his God. After many months of faithfulness, what turn of event came his way? (Genesis 39: 7-12)

_____

_____

How does Joseph respond? (Genesis 39:8,12)

_____

_____

Joseph responded to this temptation with the exact action that the Scriptures demand of each one of us.

I Corinthians 6:18 _____

2 Timothy 2:22) _____

There are no words; no need for discussion. The response is to flee, to do it quickly and to stay away.

From outward appearances was Joseph blessed for doing right? (Genesis 39:13-20) _____

Choosing to be righteous and resisting temptation does not always receive immediate reward. There is often a cost for doing right. It might be referred to as the cost of discipleship.

SECOND STOP IN EGYPT

It appears that Joseph's intense "discipleship lessons" are not over. His second stop in Egypt finds him in the king's prison. Describe his experience there. (Genesis 39:1-4)

_____

_____

As always, the Lord is with Joseph and he prospers at everything he does. The keeper of the prison is blessed because of Joseph. And once again, since Joseph prospers at everything that he does what does Joseph have?

_____

Nothing.

From all outward appearances, Joseph's visible circumstances are not all that encouraging. God is blessing him but he is still in prison.

And yet in these circumstances, Joseph does the job that he is called to do. There is no hint of whining or complaining. He remains faithful in the prison and to his God.

READ GENESIS 40

After some time in prison, what turn of events come his way? (Genesis 40)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

FORGOTTEN

From outward appearances was Joseph blessed for ministering to those in the prison and interpreting their dreams? (Genesis 40:23) _____

When someone interprets dreams the way Joseph does, and everything comes to pass EXACTLY the way Joseph predicts, would it not be impossible for someone that was a witness to that to ever forget it? And yet that is precisely what happened. God has to have had his hand on this. It is not time. Joseph needs to be available for the king when the king needs him.

Psalm 27:14

_____

_____

Joseph must wait. He has got to be wondering. After interpreting the dreams for the king's prisoners and seeing them

come to pass so accurately, Joseph has much to think on. God has given him a gift. Surely Joseph remembers those dreams that he had as a child, so many years ago. Surely he ponders on what they could have meant.

Chapter 40 ends. How much time passes before anything of any interest happens in that prison where Joseph is serving? (Genesis 41:1)_____

That is 730 days! That is a long time of nothing! Nothing but wondering! And waiting! And trusting! And faithfully serving!

READ GENESIS 41

It's just another day for Joseph; another day to be faithful, to serve, to trust God. Who would ever think that this day would be different? How does sudden opportunity come to Joseph? (Genesis 41:1-14)

_____

_____

When Pharaoh, the ruler of the whole Egyptian empire, needs Joseph's assistance, who does Joseph immediately defer to? (Genesis 41:16, 25, 28, 32)

_____

What were the dreams and what is the interpretation that God gives? (Genesis 41: 15-31)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Joseph gives the interpretation to Pharaoh, and without delay he does what? (Genesis 41:33-36)

_____

_____

It's all becoming so clear. Joseph has been prepared for this. He spent many years overseeing the affairs of Potiphar's entire household. He spent many years overseeing the affairs of the king's prison. And so without delay, he naturally is able to develop a plan to oversee the needs that Egypt will require in this upcoming crisis.

This becomes unmistakably obvious to the Pharaoh himself. And what does the Pharaoh do? (Genesis 41: 37-46)

_____

_____

_____

God has his plan. His plans are not only good. They are best. Joseph understood nothing as he went from one misfortune to another. Joseph never had the blessing of seeing God in a vision or a dream as did his father, grandfather and great-grandfather. But Joseph knew that God was with him. Joseph believed God. And Joseph purposed to be faithful in the little things. Not that Joseph loved the circumstances but he trusted the Lord.