

[Genesis 39:1-10](#) (read)

Opening Scripture: [Genesis 39:1-10](#)*Republic, Sept. 15, 2024***Text: [Genesis 39, 40, 41](#)****Title: The Tough, but Inspiring, Life of Joseph, Pt. 2**

REVIEW OF Pt 1:

- 1. Joseph's father was named Jacob. He was the 2nd generation after Abraham. So, there was Abraham, then Isaac, and then Jacob.**

- 2. Joseph was Born 11th of 12 children. But he was the first born of his father Jacob's true love, which was his wife Rachel. (Jacob's name was later changed by God to Israel in [Genesis 35:9-10](#))**

- 3. Joseph's brothers were jealous of Joseph because: (3 main reasons)**
 - a. They could tell that their father, Jacob, loved Joseph the most.**
 - b. They did not like Joseph sharing his dreams with them. (acting superior to them)**
 - c. Joseph tattletaled on them, bringing a bad report to his father about them.**

- 4. The Bible tells us that Joseph was 17 yrs old ([Genesis 37:2](#)) when his brothers plotted to kill him.**

Joseph's emotions go from feeling the hatred of his brothers, to being traumatized in a cistern, to being sold as a slave.

- 5. He did not know it at that time, but God is going to bless Joseph "in the middle of the mess."**

We saw that he got sold to the right person. Joseph used his skills and talents from God. There is no indication that he "moped" and allowed depression to effect his personality. He stayed strong in God. He kept doing the right thing for God. And, he eventually got promoted, as a result.

KEEP living right in God's eyes, then, no matter what you go through, God will eventually bless you.

As we look today at part 2 of this Joseph series, we will see that things turned around for

Joseph, and started going very well. But, then things turned ugly for him, again.

The Christian life can have a lot of ups and downs. Even Churches can experience a lot of ups and downs. *I think there are at least 4 main reasons there are ups and downs:*

1. God is trying to show you something that you need to change in your life, or to grow in that area of your life. If you learn your lesson, your personality will become more like God's personality.

So, ask yourself this morning: Has God been trying to teach me something through what I have been going through? What is He trying to teach me?

There could be a 2nd reason for the ups and downs:

2. If you are truly trying to follow God to the best of your ability, and you want His will more than your own will, Satan is not going to like it. Satan sees your potential, and he is on the attack to try to stop, or at least slow down, what God wants to do.

A 3rd possible reason:

3. We live in a world where man/woman has free choice. That free choice is going to sometimes be used to follow the ways of Satan, and thereby do damage to us.

A 4th possible reason for our ups and downs:

4. God wants you to get to the point that you **have to** totally depend on Him.

Totally depending on God means:

- a. Not doing your own thinkng. ([Prov. 3:5](#) - not leaning on your own understanding)
So, depending on God would mean trying to get God's thoughts on everything.
- b. Not making decisions without first allowing God to influence what we should do.

If we feel we **have to have** God's help in life, whereby we are dependent on Him, then we know we need Him to help us think right, to keep our feelings right, and keep our decisions and actions right. This is what it means to be totally dependent on Him.
I NEED GOD.

Ask yourself this morning: Is God trying to teach me to be completely dependent on Him, and to stop relying on myself, or my own understanding?

- *How am I doing with learning that my thinking must line up with His thinking?*
- *How am I doing with allowing God to influence all of my decisions?*

In the case of Joseph, we really do not know which of the above 4 reasons were the reasons Joseph went through all he went through. It could be all of them.

You might say "Well, I thought the reason Joseph went through what he went through was so that God could move Joseph to Egypt & rescue people when the economy later got bad."

Well, that is ONE reason why things happened the way they did. BUT, the first experience of being sold by his brothers and sent to Egypt would be enough to make that happen. It would not account for his 2nd and 3rd bad experiences he went through.

The point is, that what happened to Joseph was not completely about moving Joseph to Egypt so he could rescue nations later on. There were opportunities for Joseph to grow in his faith.

All negative experiences in life can become opportunities for us to grow.

6. So, after life begins to go wonderful for Joseph, then it turns bad again.

So, here Joseph has been promoted to be in charge of a high ranking official's household. The Bible says that Joseph was put in charge of everything that Potiphar had. The bible worded it like this in verse 6, "So, he (*Potiphar*) left, in Joseph's care, everything he had with Joseph in charge. He did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate."

Life, for Joseph, is now going really well.

Then, for the first time, the bible describes Joseph's looks. It says he was well built. We can assume that means somewhat muscular, or at least in very good shape. Plus the Bible describes him as being handsome.

Potiphar's wife became attracted to Joseph and made numerous advances toward him. That story is told in **Genesis 39:6-10**.

Genesis 39:6-10 (NKJV)

- ⁶ Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, & he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. **Now Joseph was handsome in form & appearance.** (NIV ---> [Genesis 39:6](#) "...well-built and handsome.")
- ⁷ And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."
- ⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what *is* with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. (NIV--> "*my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, everything he owns he has entrusted to my care.*")
- ⁹ *There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me*

but you, because you *are* his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

- 10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her.

So, Joseph did the right thing, **every time**, by rejecting her. Eventually, she became angry. When people get angry, it gives Satan lots of room to operate in their lives. The woman decides to be revengeful and falsely accuse Joseph of trying to have sex with her. As a result of her false accusation, Potiphar believes her and Joseph was thrown in prison.

That story is in:

[Genesis 39:11-20](#) a (NKJV)

- 11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house *was* inside, (*In other words, no witnesses around*)
- 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.
- 13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand & fled outside,
- 14 that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, & I cried out with a loud voice.
- 15 And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."
- 16 So she kept his garment with her until his (*Joseph's*) master came home.
- 17 Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me;
- 18 so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me & fled outside."
- 19 So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused.
- 20 Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* confined ...

Insight:

It would be very easy for Joseph to become bitter at people, and at God. In Joseph's eyes he did the right thing, and yet now, he suffers for doing the right thing.

Have you ever done the right thing, then suffered for it?

Did you allow yourself to become mad at God because of it? If so, were you able to correct your angry thinking at God?

Also note that:

This is now the 2nd time that people tried "to burn" Joseph. It is difficult when this happens to you multiple times to not turn against people, to not become bitter with

others, to not become judgemental and untrusting of everyone. But, once you start that line of thinking you will tend to do it the rest of your life. It is not a good road to go down. It will just make you cynical and miserable.

Have you met cynical and miserable people who are that way because they felt other people tried to hurt them in some way? Did you notice the cynical, miserable part of their personality, & did it make you be a little hesitant to be around them? Did you see how it negatively effected their lives?

I am not sure why Joseph needed to go through being falsely accused for a 2nd time.

He already faced enough when his brothers falsely accused him, talked about killing him, and ended up selling him as a slave.

But regardless, Joseph stays true to God. And, he is not going to allow himself to have bitter feelings towards others. He is going to keep serving God with the right attitude, no matter what.

When you face false accusations yourself, you will probably have to work hard on your own thinking to be like Joseph was, as well as to be like God wants you to be.

7. While in prison, God was with Joseph, and He starts blessing him again.

[Genesis 39:20-21](#) (NKJV)

²⁰ Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* confined. And he was there in the prison.

²¹ **But the LORD was with Joseph** and showed him mercy, **and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.**

Insight:

Do you want to be mad & angry at people, be a bitter person, and go through messes on your own? OR, Do you want to live right and have the LORD to be with you?

What we should want the most is to live right so that the Lord to be with us, helping us.

- This can only happen when we keep God's will on our mind, and not our own will.
- It can only happen when we do not allow ourself to focus on negative things about others, but instead, keep things on what we can learn from this.

- This can only happen when we keep things in life about trusting God.
- And, it can only happen when we Don't ever allow Satan to influence our lives.

Joseph is falsely accused and sent to prison. This happened because of the work of a angry, very revengeful, woman. She tried to get what she wanted, but once it became totally clear she wasn't going to get it, her arrogance (pride) caused her to use revenge to get back at Joseph.

She was probably thinking like this *"How dare him refuse me? Does he not realize who I am, and that I get what I want? I will teach him a lesson."*

Joseph did the right thing, and it ended up costing him.

It is easy to think it will never cost us when we do the right thing. But, that is just not true. Sometimes doing the right thing, does cost us.

Have you ever done the right thing, & it cost you? Can you think of a time like that?

How did Joseph not become angry and bitter over this? Wouldn't it be tempting to find yourself praying to God with words like "God, why did you let this happen to me? I did the right thing, and now I am paying for it?"

Yet, the Bible does not say anything about Joseph having an attitude with God, or developing bitterness toward others.

Consequently, The LORD was with him. That is what WE SHOULD WANT, for the Lord to be with us.

If you want God to be with you in your life, you have to allow Him:

- to teach you things.
- And, you have to react to things in the way HE wants you to react.
- Then, you have to keep telling yourself God will make something good out of this.

If we do this, here is what will happen: You will see what God faces all the time. You will look at others from His perspective, being merciful while you wait for a chance they might change. You will understand how God's mercy waits so that others have a chance in life to change. It is another area in our life that our thinking becomes more like God's thinking.

Verses 21-23 continue to talk about what God did for Joseph after he was treated wrong:

Genesis 39:21-23 (NKJV)

- ²¹ But **the LORD was with Joseph** and showed him mercy, **and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.**
- ²² And **the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners** who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing.
- ²³ **The keeper of the prison did not look into anything *that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he (Joseph) did, the LORD made it prosper.***
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That is a HUGE blessing. Whatever he (Joseph) did, the Lord made it prosper.

So, not only was God with Joseph by helping him have peace & not bitterness (bitterness will ruin your peace), but God was also blessing his life in the midst of the negative situation he was in.

Insights:

Stop **BLAMING** people. Blaming is not a godly quality. With Joseph's life, we do not see verses saying that Joseph blamed anyone for his situation.

The way to quit blaming is:

1. To trust God in every negative situation that He has a plan of some sort.
2. To Look at yourself and try to grow in your situation, or learn what you are supposed to be learning from what you are going through. (instead of blaming)

Blaming puts your energy & focus outside of yourself. It cause you to take no responsibility or to not try to learn from it. You will never get God's wisdom when you blame. Again, blaming causes you to be convinced that something outside of yourself must change.

Trusting God, and looking inside of ourselves is what brings answers in our lives.

If you grow from every negative experience, the chances Satan is going to keep hitting you so hard will be less and less. *Why?* because every time he does something to cause negative experiences, you grow. He will get to the point of being tired of seeing you grow all the time.

8. Later, while Joseph is still in prison, 2 of Pharaoh's servants (a cupbearer* & a baker)

just happened to get thrown into the same prison as Joseph.

Genesis 40:1-8 (NKJV)

- 1 It came to pass after these things *that* the butler (*NIV and ESV ---> cupbearer. The hebrew word has to do with "drink"*) and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt.
- 2 And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker.
- 3 So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, **the place where Joseph was confined.**
- 4 And **the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them** (*causing Joseph to be around them a lot*), and he served them; so they were in custody for a while.
- 5 Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who *were* confined in the prison, **had a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night and each man's dream with its own interpretation.**
- 6 And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they *were* sad.
- 7 So he asked Pharaoh's officers who *were* with him in the custody of his lord's house, saying, "Why do you look *so* sad today?"
- 8 And they said to him, "We each have had a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it." So Joseph said to them, "**Do not interpretations belong to God?** Tell *them* to me, please."

Don't you love the second part of verse 8? "Do not interpretations belong to God?"

Joseph KNEW where his gift came from. He never allowed his God-given gifts to go to his head as if he had that gift solely of himself.

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary says **the Cupbearer was:*

"That officer of the household who tasted the wine and passed it to those at the table. He was often chosen for his personal beauty and attractions and in ancient oriental courts was always a person of rank and importance. From the confidential nature of his duties and his frequent access to the royal presence, he possessed great influence."

I would word it like this: He was a guy that prevented the King from getting poisoned by tasting the wine himself before giving it to the King.

So, while the cupbearer and baker were in prison they both have dreams one night and could not figure them out. **Joseph correctly interprets both dreams in [Gen. 40:9-20](#).**

I will just summarize those verses:

He interprets the cupbearer's dream to mean he will be restored in 3 days. He interprets the baker's dream to mean he will die in 3 days.

Then, both dreams came true within 3 days, like Joseph said they would. Unfortunately, the baker dies like Joseph said would happen. But, the cupbearer gets to live, and gets restored to his position with Pharaoh, like Joseph said would happen. Then, Joseph asked the cupbearer to please remember him when he is restored to his position with the King.

*Here is what the bible says happened:***Genesis 40:21-23** (NIV)

- ²¹ He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh's hand,
²² but he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation.
²³ **The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.**

So, God helped Joseph to solve the two dreams, and that was a good thing. **But, this also had to have become another frustration for Joseph. He tells the cupbearer to remember him, but he doesn't do it. And, Joseph is stuck in prison another 2 years.**

2 things here:

- # 1 - In my opinion this is a 3rd frustrating, bad thing for Joseph. Just when he thinks things might improve and there may be a way out of prison, his hopes fall away. So, when we count what Joseph's brothers did to him, then what Potiphar's wife did to him, and now we add this situation of being in prison 2 more years. It had to be frustrating for him.
- # 2 - When you do nice things for people, and they forget you, it is very frustrating. As a Christian, you always want to do all nice things "for God." If you do that, you will be less frustrated with people when they forget you later on, or some even turn against you later on.

Example:

I had a minister on our district who told me some of his frustrations one day. He helped start a new Church that he was overseeing. He gave up some of his own church people to get that new church started. A short time later, a bunch of them left the new church to go and start their own church. The minister felt like they turned against him.

The minister told me that One of the families who turned against him was one that the minister had done all kinds of stuff for, for many years. He said "I married them. I did their baptisms. I dedicated their kids. I nurtured them. And, in the end, they turn-

ed against me. It is like they never appreciated any of the good things that I had done for them." Then he said "Those kind of things are very hard to handle."

Have you ever had people do that to you? Have you had people you helped, and they forgot you, or forgot all you did for them?

In Joseph's case, he interpreted a dream for the cupbearer, which came true. Granted,
 - He was doing God's work when he interpreted the dream.
 - God is the one that gave Joseph the interpretation.
 - Joseph just did what God wanted him to do.

BUT, at the same time, the man he helped ends up forgetting him, which causes Joseph to stay in prison **for another 2 years. Ouch.**

UP AND DOWN is how life goes, many times. Things look good, things look bad. You get to the point in life that you just want things to be consistantly good.

9. Joseph's gift from God of interpreting dreams finally gets recognized, and he starts the journey to bigger and better things in life. In fact, he is about to have his best years of his life.

Pharaoh has a dream and no one can interpret it. The cupbearer finally remembers Joseph at this point. He tells Pharaoh about Joseph's ability to interpret dreams. Pharaoh calls for Joseph, and Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream. The story is told in entire chapter of [Genesis 41](#), specifically, [Gen. 41:1-57](#).

We will read only Gen. 41:1-46 (read)

Then go on down to [Gen. 41:53-57](#)

[Genesis 41:53-57](#) (NKJV)

- ⁵³ Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended,
⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.
⁵⁵ So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, do."
⁵⁶ The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt.
⁵⁷ **So all countries came** to Joseph in Egypt to buy *grain*, because the famine was

severe in all lands.

So, Joseph told Pharaoh to save food during the bountiful years to use during future years of famine. Pharaoh is so happy with the dream interpretation that he ends up placing Joseph in charge of everything. Pharaoh tells Joseph that only he, Pharaoh, will have more authority than Joseph. (Joseph is 2nd in command of everything)

2 Questions:

How old was Joseph when his brothers threatened to kill him? **17 yrs old**

How long had Joseph waited until life FINALLY settled down and started to consistently become good for him? **About 13 years.**

Genesis 41:46 (NIV) "Joseph was 30 years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh, King of Egypt..."

Conclusion -

The Christian life is all about growing, learning, becoming a better person. It is never about being mad at other people. You might get frustrated with people, at first. But, you should quickly move past that to learning about your own growth. If you do not learn this lesson in life, you are going to have a very hard life, not grow a lot, and you will fail God again & again. You will never become all God wants you to become.

Life is all about trusting God that He has a plan, and not letting your negative emotions run ahead of you. Continued wrong emotions just create an atmosphere that Satan can work in.

Today, we looked at a lot of insights that we can learn from Joseph. It is a chance for all of us to remind ourselves of how God wants us to see every negative experience we go through.

How are you doing with your own growth? Are there things God wants you to change or learn? What are those things?