

Scripture: Genesis 41 v 9 to 13.

Joseph Part 3.

Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I remember my faults this day. When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker, we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream. And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him"

The Bible Studies we have considered so far on the life of Joseph, has taken us on a journey from the time he was born to the period he spent in prison, we begin now to look at the events that resulted in a turnaround in the circumstances of Joseph, his brothers, and his father Jacob.

It is very clear from scripture that no matter how severe a situation is in the life of a nation, Kingdom, or family, God can alter and change any condition and alter it for good, this was what happened to Joseph, he said to his brothers in Genesis 50 v 19 to 21 "*Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones."* And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

This is also what transpired in the Acts of the Apostles when Saul was making havoc of the early Church Christians, God intervened in a remarkable way, and no one expected the Lord to intervene the way He did. The conversion of Saul must have taken them all by surprise, for in Acts 2 when the Holy Spirit filled the 120 in the upper room, Saul, later Paul must have known about the conversion of the three thousand, and yet at that time he was untouched by the power of the Holy Spirit, and preaching of Peter, although he may have been in Jerusalem at the time.

It shows to us that no situation, however difficult, is not that severe, for the Lord to reverse it. God in His sovereignty can change any bad situation to good. The unfolding of Gods purpose results in the intervention of the Lord, who then works according to His own strategy to bring about His will. Let's see this at work in Joseph's life.

Dreams featured very much in the life of Joseph, the Lord showed to him via dreams that he would be a national leader that others would look up to, he was shown that he would have authority over his family, it is significant that in prison it was again the use of dreams that the Lord used to bring about the purpose He had for Joseph and his family. Let's consider.

1. Joseph's Release.

Notice what Joseph does in preparation ready for his audience with Pharaoh Genesis 41 v 14 *"Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh"*.

Joseph had been in prison another two years after the release of the butler, and knew the importance of meeting Pharaoh, Pharaoh was the supreme leader of Egypt, no one was greater in power, it was an important meeting for Joseph, one of the most important meetings of his life, so he prepares well.

I believe this is conveying to us something that is necessary to consider, how do we prepare ourselves to meet with the Lord, it is important to come before Him reverently, and humbly, we should come grateful that the Lord invites us to enter his presence with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.

To meet Pharaoh, Joseph has to change his clothing, he has to put on different garments, the prison clothes were inappropriate for him to wear to meet such an important person. Isaiah 64 v 6 *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags"*. These rags are inappropriate for us to wear to meet the Lord.

However, the hymn writer says "I take Him as my holiness, my spirits spotless heavenly dress, I take the Lord my righteousness, I take He undertakes". Therefore we sing "I have put on my garments of praise the spirit of heaviness has gone from me, I have put on my garment of praise. Now we are appropriately dressed.

Joseph took off the clothes that linked him with prison life and was clothed in garments acceptable to Pharaoh. How vital it is for us to come suitably before the Lord. I remember listening to the late Pastor Tom Rees as far back as 1961. He said this "When I go to church, I like to have a hat on my

head, and as I enter the church I take it off as a first act of reverence to God". The moral is this, we are to have respect for the Lord when we to meet together to worship Him.

When Joseph came out of the prison It meant he experienced emancipation, he must have thought how glorious to be free, after spending some in prison for a crime he did not commit, the relief would have been quite overwhelming.

It was possibly an awesome thought to him to think, he was going to meet Pharaoh, but what was he being called to see him for, he may have known, or he may not have known, this is something we don't know.

When he is brought before Pharaoh, the reason he was given this audience is soon know, as Pharaoh says to him Genesis 41v15 & 16 *"I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace"*

As the story unfolds, we see next.

2. Pharaohs Review.

We need to listen first to what Pharaoh said to, Joseph.

Genesis 41 v 17 to 28 *"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river: And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat fleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow: And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and lean fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good: And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them: And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me. And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he shows unto Pharaoh"*

Pharaoh reiterates the dream to Joseph going into it in great detail, the reason Joseph was called for was because none of the people Pharaoh had confidence in the past were able to help him. Genesis 41 v 8 says *"And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but [there was] none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh"*.

It is at this point the butler remembered what Joseph had asked him to do, he remembers his fault and acknowledges it. It is one thing to be conscious of a fault, but it is another thing to do something about it, the butler did something about his fault, he rectifies it, and as a result the process begins, which saw Joseph being released from prison.

I trust that this incident will teach us that discovering we are at fault in some way will encourage us rectify it, if the butler had not taken the necessary steps to rectify his fault, Joseph would have remained in prison unjustly. Joseph's trial continued until the butler acknowledged his fault, if ever you are at fault in a matter; don't be afraid to put it right. James wrote James 5 v 16 *"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much"*

2. Joseph's Revelation.

Genesis 41 v 16 *"And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace"*

In answer to Pharaoh concerning the dreams, which he had yet to hear, Joseph lets him know that what answer he gives to him is not from his own mind, but a revelation from God. Pharaoh proceeds further and reiterates his dream to Joseph.

Joseph being open to receive revelation begins to tell Pharaoh the exact meaning of the dreams he had, Joseph tells him the dreams are one but it has two parts to it, Joseph is given an interpretation of it by the Lord, the revelation is clear and Joseph tells Pharaoh the meaning. Let's consider here the importance of revelation and the impact it has on the recipient of it and those who have something revealed to them by the Lord.

In Daniel 5: v 5 & 6 we read *"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of*

the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another."

Belshazzar who had made a feast was greatly troubled by this writing on the wall, it frightened him so he called for the astrologers, soothsayers, and Chaldeans to tell him the interpretation of what was written, but they were unable to show what the meaning was, verse 8 says *"Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof"*

In Daniel 5 v 11 & 12 we read what the Queen said to the King *"There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation"*

Daniel 5 v 26 to 28 *"This is the interpretation of the thing:*

Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians"

We see the importance of God giving revelation that illuminates our understanding so that we are in the light because that is what revelation is, it is enlightening our understanding.

Revelation is God given, when Peter said to Jesus *"You are the Christ the Son of the living God"*

Jesus then says that Peter didn't know it by learning about Him, but because God had made it known to him.

Then Paul says in Galatians 1 v 11 & 12 *"But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ"*. It is clear therefore that revelation is not acquired by learning, but by the understanding being enlightened. Joseph had a revelation from God. The next point to consider is.

3. Pharaohs Recognition.

Following Joseph's revelation and interpretation of the dream we read in Genesis 41 v 38 *"And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is"* There was an acknowledgment by Pharaoh that Joseph was different to any other man he had met, he recognizes that it was the Spirit of God that made him different, this was more than a man with a different human spirit, this was a man who possess the Spirit of God.

We read of Caleb in Numbers 14 v 24 *"But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereunto he went; and his seed shall possess it."*

He had another spirit is what vital here because it is identifying that there was something distinctly different about Caleb. Throughout history there have been men and women of God who have stood out because they had another spirit. Augustine, Polycarp, Spurgeon, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and Dr Billy Graham.

There are people I am sure that you can think of who are definitely different because they have another spirit, which is not a bad spirit, or an evil one, not a controlling one, but a Holy Spirit controlled one. I see here how essential it is to be filled with the Holy Spirit and allowing the fruit of the Spirit to manifest itself in our lives. The mark that is upon us should be the hallmark of the Holy Spirit. In Gal 6 v 17 Paul says, *"From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus"*.

Acts 4 v 13 says this about Peter *"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."*

4. Joseph's Recommendation.

Genesis 41 v 33 to 37 *"Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants."*

Joseph now recommends to Pharaoh what steps should be taken that will save the people during the years of famine. It was wise council to Pharaoh, notice the advice Joseph gives to him, let specific people be chosen, which will be responsible for collecting the food and store it in a safe place, this can then be distributed to the people during the drought.

I want to use this as an illustration, to point out the importance of making sure we store the word of God in our memory, so that during times of spiritual drought we have something to draw on. No one is exempt from experiencing times of drought, however long one has been a Christian there will have been times when we are spiritually dry. It is good to take note of what Joseph advised and make sure our barn is full.

Pharaoh accepts the council of Joseph and needed not to look any further for the right man to fill this position, for he acknowledges that Joseph is the man.

Genesis 41 v 38 & 39 *"And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art"* Joseph is appointed to a position which meant that only Pharaoh was higher than him. He was in charge of the whole food storage program and implemented what he had outlined to Pharaoh.

We see here the purpose of why he had to experience hardship, and prison, it was so that ultimately, he would be raised to a position where he was in supreme authority of the affairs in Egypt. People of Egypt had to come to him during the years of drought to get food. People of other nations also had to come to him for food, because the drought was trans-local, it went further afield than Egypt, it touched the land of Canaan.

It is when there is a lack of food in Canaan that Jacob, Joseph's father sends his sons to Egypt to buy food. The brothers of Joseph, the ones who sold him, the ones who deceived their father, these same brothers had to come to Egypt to buy food.

Going to Egypt meant they would have to meet Joseph, they had no idea what had happened to him, they were in for the greatest shock they would ever have.

Genesis 42 v 6 to 8. *"And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spoke roughly unto them; and he said unto them, whence come ye? And they said, from the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him."*

Although Joseph knew them, they were ignorant as to his identity, the story goes on to reiterate how Joseph gives them food but took no money from them but, sent them back with food, except for Simeon who was kept in Egypt, and says to the rest of them. Genesis 42 vs 20 *"But bring your youngest brother unto me; so, shall your words be verified, and you shall not die. And they did so"*

5. Joseph's Reconciliation.

After his brothers returned home and reiterated their story to Jacob, they run out of food again, so Jacob asks them to go back to Egypt for more food, take the money back with you and more for the food you are going to buy, he is told we are not to return unless our youngest brother accompanies us. The saying affected Jacob, who is conscious that one son, as far as he knew was no more, and Simeon was left in Egypt, he was now afraid if Benjamin went down to Egypt, he would lose another son. Judah then says if Benjamin is not returned to you after our visit to Egypt you can take my life.

On their return to Egypt to buy more food for Jacob and his family. The story begins to unfold, Joseph cannot contain his emotions any longer and withdraws from his brothers going into another room and weeps, then after washing himself he returns to his brothers.

However before revealing himself to them, he tells the stewards to fill their sacks with food, and to put the money back into them plus his own silver cup into the sack of Benjamin and off they go on their journey back to Canaan. Joseph then sends his stewards to search their sacks and in Benjamin's sack is the silver cup of Joseph, they then return to Joseph. It is following this that Joseph after making his brothers sweat a little, and reveals to them who he is.

Genesis 45 v 1 to 4 *"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all of them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh*

heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt". The reconciliation was complete.

Following this his brother's return to Jacob telling him the news that Joseph was not dead but alive and in charge of all the affairs of Egypt, and preparations were made for all Jacobs family to go to Egypt including Jacob himself.

6. Joseph's Reunion.

Genesis 46 v 29 & 30 "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."

It is hard to imagine the feelings of Jacob and Joseph, Jacob had lived with the understanding that Joseph had died a number of years ago, the shock of actually seeing him must have had a profound effect on both Jacob and Joseph.

Reunions can vary depending on the circumstances that occurred, which resulted in a period of separation. School and college friends meet up after years of separation to a reunion meeting, children who were adopted often seek to find their birth mother or biological father, and when they do a meeting is arranged and a very emotional reunion is experienced.

It was an emotional experience that the prodigal son had with his father, who then celebrated his son's life. When we were reconciled to God by the blood of the cross, it was an emotional experience.

It was emotional and ecstatic for both Jacob and Joseph as they embraced each other. Jacob was moving towards the end of his life, so his meeting with Joseph meant he could go to his grave in peace, which is what he did after bringing prophetic word to his sons, and Joseph's sons. The final point is.

7. Joseph's Repatriation.

Genesis 50 v 24 to 26 *"And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swear to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So, Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt"*.

We read then in Exodus 13 v 19 *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straightly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.*

Joseph did not want his resting place to be in Egypt, he wanted his resting place to be in the Promised Land. When Israel exited from Egypt, they carried the bones of Joseph with them taking them to the Promised Land.

We should realize as Christians that this earth is not our final resign place, our citizenship is in heaven, when the Lord return to rapture the church the Bible says the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, so we shall be forever with the Lord.

What a story this is, a story in which we can trace the purpose of God in the life of Jacob, and his son Joseph. We can see, but for the intervention of God, Israel would have been wiped out during a drought of seven years. But God preserved his promised seed, which still exists today.

1. Joseph's Release
2. Joseph's Revelation
3. Pharaohs Recognition
4. Joseph's Recommendation
5. Joseph's Reconciliation
6. Joseph's Reunion
7. Joseph's Repatriation