

Faith Under Fire

The Life of Joseph

A Midweek Bible Study Series

Part Three – Administrate The Dream

- **Genesis 37:5** *And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.*
- **Genesis 40:5** *And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.*
- **Genesis 41:15** *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, 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.*

JOSEPH'S DREAM

- Joseph had the grandest personal dreams of anyone in the Old Testament. God revealed to him that his brothers – the forefathers of the tribes of Israel – would bow down to him. In retrospect it is apparent that, had not been for Joseph's intervention, the future Hebrew nation would have perished in the terrible famine of his day.
- But like most Bible characters, the road to Joseph's dream was long and rough. We have a different perspective on his life than he did at the time; someone has said that "hindsight is 20/20." Joseph did not know the end of the story! For all he knew, his dreams had been shattered forever by the cruel actions of his brothers.
- **Genesis 37:19-20** ¹⁹ *And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.* ²⁰ *Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.*

- For many people, such a setback would have been the end of the road, because their attitude from that point on would have done them in. But not Joseph! The next time we see him he is involved wholeheartedly in making the dreams of others come true.
- Joseph had many reasons to remain uninvolved and not give his energy to the dreams of others:
 1. His dreams were not coming true.
 2. His brethren had done wrong to him.
 3. His circumstances were unfair.

YOUR ATTITUDE DETERMINES YOUR ACTIONS!

- The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind. – *William James, Psychologist*
- A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him. – *David Brinkley, Television Journalist*
- The last of our human freedoms is to choose our attitude in any given circumstances. – *Victor Frankl, Psychologist & Holocaust Survivor*
- Pity is one of the noblest emotions available to human beings; self-pity is possibly the most ignoble ... an incapacity, a crippling emotional disease that severely distorts our perception of reality ... a narcotic that leaves its addicts wasted and derelict. – *Eugene H. Peterson*

Illustration: Chuck Swindoll tells the story of Chippie the parakeet. The bird's problems began when the woman who owned him decided to do something nice for her sweetly singing companion, and clean up the seeds and loose feathers from the bottom of his cage using a vacuum. When the phone rang, the owner turned to pick it up, and with a thud and a whoosh, Chippie was gone. The owner quickly turned off the vacuum and unzipped the bag. There was Chippie, stunned but breathing. Seeing that he was covered with black dust, his owner rushed Chippie to the bathtub, where she turned on the faucet full blast and held the bird under the icy water. At that point she realized that she'd done even more damage, and she quickly cranked up her blow dryer and gave the wet, shivering little parakeet a blast. Needless to say, Chippie doesn't sing much anymore! People who are unable to overcome their setbacks are a little like Chippie. **They allow their negative experiences to color the way they live their lives.**

THE TWO FROGS

Two frogs fell into a can of cream – or so I've heard it told.
The sides of the can were shiny and steep, the cream was deep and cold.
"Oh, what's the use?" said number one, 'tis fate, no help's around –
Goodbye, my friend! Goodbye, cruel world!" And weeping still, he drowned.
But number two, of sterner stuff, dog-paddled in surprise
And while he wiped his creamy face and dried his creamy eyes,
"I'll swim awhile, at least," he said – or so it has been said –
"It wouldn't really help the world if one more frog was dead."
An hour or two he kicked and swam – not once he stopped to mutter,
But kicked and swam, and swam and kicked, then hopped out, via butter.

BECAUSE JOSEPH REFUSED TO REMAIN UNINVOLVED, GOD BLESSED HIM AS HE SERVED.

- **Genesis 39:2 (NLT)** *The Lord was with Joseph and blessed him greatly as he served in the home of his Egyptian master.*

POTIPHAR'S DREAM

- **Genesis 39:5-6 (NLT)** ⁵ *From the day Joseph was put in charge, the LORD began to bless Potiphar for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs began to run smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished.* ⁶ *So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't have a worry in the world, except to decide what he wanted to eat!*

JAILER'S DREAM

- **Genesis 39:22-23 (NLT)** ²² *Before long, the jailer put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison.* ²³ *The chief jailer had no more worries after that, because Joseph took care of everything. The LORD was with him, making everything run smoothly and successfully.*

CUPBEARER'S DREAM

- **Genesis 40:12-15, 23 (NLT)** ¹² *"I know what the dream means," Joseph said. "The three branches mean three days.* ¹³ *Within three days Pharaoh will take you out of prison and return you to your position as his chief cup-bearer.* ¹⁴ *And please have some pity on me when you are back in his favor. Mention me to Pharaoh, and ask him to let me out of here.* ¹⁵ *For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in jail, but I did nothing to deserve it." ...* ²³ *Pharaoh's cup-bearer, however, promptly forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought.*

PHARAOH'S DREAM

- **Genesis 41:38-40 (NLT)** ³⁸ *As they discussed who should be appointed for the job, Pharaoh said, "Who could do it better than Joseph? For he is a man who is obviously filled with the spirit of God."* ³⁹ *Turning to Joseph, Pharaoh said, "Since God has revealed the meaning of the dreams to you, you are the wisest man in the land!"* ⁴⁰ *I hereby appoint you to direct this project. You will manage my household and organize all my people. Only I will have a rank higher than yours."*

WHERE WAS JOSEPH'S DREAM DURING THIS TWENTY YEARS?

Joseph could not have known that, while he was unselfishly giving himself to the dreams of others, that God was making his own dreams come true!

When his brothers bowed before him, it all made sense! He had been through much pain, but God used it to save an entire nation!

How Can I Help "Administrate The Dream"?

1. Don't wait to be **asked**.
2. Offer to take care of the **details**.
3. Be **enthusiastic** about the dream!