

I am the Lord, your Maker, and I am Making You (2)



1 The Making of Joseph

1.1 Gen 39:1-4 and Gen 39:20-23

Gen 39¹ Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And **Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian**, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. ² The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. ³ **And his master saw that the LORD was with him** and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority.

Gen 39²⁰ 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. 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 did, the LORD made it prosper.**

1.2 Ps 105:16-22

Ps 105¹⁶ Moreover He called for a famine in the land; He destroyed all the provision of bread.

¹⁷ **He sent a man before them—Joseph—who was sold as a slave.**

¹⁸ **They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons.**

¹⁹ **Until the time that his word came to pass, The word of the LORD tested him.**

²⁰ The king sent and released him, The ruler of the people let him go free.

²¹ He made him lord of his house, And ruler of all his possessions,

²² To bind his princes at his pleasure, And teach his elders wisdom.

2 God's Living Word Makes Joseph

2.1 Theological Summary of Joseph's Life

Ps 105:16-22 is a condensed version of Joseph's life.

- 14 chapters in Genesis are compressed into 7 verses.
- The theological summary of Joseph's life is in v17-19.
- God's word came to him in dreams as a young man.
- And he was tested and tried UNTIL God's word came to pass in his life.

2.2 The Living Word Tests and Shapes Joseph

God's word given to Joseph initiates the making and shaping of his life.

- *Heb 4*¹² **For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.** ¹³ **And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.**
- The resurrected and glorified Jesus has double-edged swords coming out of His mouth.
- He strikes the nations and slays the anti-Christ army with the sword of His mouth. He also fights the compromisers in His church, the followers of Balaam and Nicolaitans.

Jesus the Living Word cuts away all illusion, fantasy, the self-deception of our own goodness and righteousness, and strength and self-importance.

- Purify and purge us, and makes us true and real and solid in our inmost being.

Joseph probably had the ambition to become the family's tribal chief like Jacob, his father, though he was the 11th son.

- God had a far bigger plan for Joseph than he could understand in his lifetime.
- He was to preserve the bloodline of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, through which the Saviour would come to save the world.
- He was to open the door of history to bring to pass God's promise to Abraham - of making his family a nation and bringing them back to the promised land to inherit it. It takes place through the Exodus.

3 How do People respond to Suffering?

3.1 Three Responses to Suffering

If someone met with unjust suffering with no end in sight, how would he respond?

1. Look for every opportunity to escape, and take revenge on his brothers
2. Resign to the life of slavery, eat what is given, and do the minimum to get by
3. Lose all hope, fall into despair, and take his own life

Joseph lived and served as if he is the owner, though he had the 'status' of a slave.

3.2 What did Potiphar see in Joseph?

Potiphar was a powerful and astute military man, heading up Pharaoh's guards, modern-day secret service for the President of the USA, White House, etc.

- There are 6500+ secret service agents in the USA protecting the POTUS, VP, etc, and their families. Ancient kings and emperors and their sons and families were no different.
- Potiphar had an eye to assess who is a danger to Pharaoh, who has good intentions, and to protect his boss. He worked with movers and shakers in Pharaohs' court and had his own network of powerful people.
- He saw the height of success and prosperity in the "White House" of Egypt. He oversaw many slaves, many levels of slaves – domestic workers, nannies, tutors, accountants, etc.
- His job required him not to trust anyone too quickly or too easily. He worked with all kinds of colleagues and slaves – JEALOUS people who will destroy others, LAZY slaves who do the minimum to get by, LIARS who take the credit for someone else's work, CORRUPT ones who take bribes, THIEVES who embezzle govt money, steal from the poor, SEXUALLY IMMORAL ones who sleep with other people's wives, UNETHICAL people who shift their work to someone else, PETTY people who do in colleagues.

What did Potiphar see in Joseph the young Hebrew slave that was so different?

- The prosperity he did not see in his world of movers and shakers.
- He saw God was with Joseph – What does this mean?
 - ✓ Demarcation of holiness – beyond clean, righteous, good – one who belongs to Someone Holy.
 - ✓ Unshaking Peace
 - ✓ Big and free Heart that does NOT grab 'mine' and compete
 - ✓ The ability of a heavenly quality that attracts God's presence & blessing

He put Joseph in charge over all of his house.

- It was a partnership of complete trust despite the status difference, age differences, and race differences.

3.3 Whose Slave Was Joseph?

Why could Joseph live and work like he owned the house when he was a slave?

- He is not bound to the status of a slave because he was bound to the Lord.
- Apostle Paul in Acts 27 assured the 276 people on the ship about to experience shipwreck, ²³ *For there stood by me this night an angel of the **God to whose I am and whom I serve**, ²⁴ saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'*
- You only know who you really are only when you know WHOSE you are.

Who or what you serve, reveal who owns you.

- God's Bondservant – you are bonded to God, you are His, and you serve Him.
- You are bonded to the one you serve.
You serve MONEY, money owns you.
You serve your POSSESSION, your possession will own you.
You serve MAN'S ADULATION, they will own you.
You serve 'YOUR MINISTRY', it will drive you.
You serve YOUR NEED TO BE IN CONTROL, it will control you.
- But if you serve God, really Him, not yourself or your selfish ambition or your hidden agenda, then God will own you and you will be truly free.

Joseph was a slave, but he did not serve like a slave, but like the owner because he derived his identity from the Lord, and served Him.

(Potiphar was the perfect person for Joseph to train under to serve in the Pharaoh's court later.)

Was Joseph bound by the political prison with no guarantee of getting out ever?

- Here too God was with him. Joseph owned the place. He became the pastor in the prison and counseled the political prisoners.

(King's prison of political prisoners of Pharaoh again was the perfect place for Joseph to train for his career in the Pharaoh's court later.)

Testimony of Kim Dae Jung, a former President of S Korea.

- Jesus appeared to him in an airplane and saves him from political murder.
- His faith kept him during the long years of imprisonment and house arrest, preparing him for the day South Korea was ready for his leadership.

4 Freedom through Slavery to Christ

4.1 What is the God's Work?

Was Joseph doing God's work when he was serving as a slave in Potiphar's house?

- Was Joseph working for the Lord when he was a prisoner in the prison?

Jesus said in [John 6:29](#) "This is the **work of God**, that you **believe** in Him whom He sent."

- What is faith? What is believing?
- It is a living breathing relationship with God. We entrust ourselves to Him and walk with Him. God is with me and His hand is upon me, and His fingerprint is on everything I touch.
- Jesus was in the perfect will of God working with a hammer as a carpenter.

Brother Lawrence practised the presence of God in the busy, hot, loud kitchen in the monastery, and did every little thing with the Lord.

- People came to learn from this monk who served the living God in the kitchen.
- Joseph is not a story of worldly success. It is a story of a man's faith in God.

I woke up with Howard Carter's motto written in his bible.

- *Let me never lose the all-important truth that to be in Thy will is better than success, and grant that I may ever love Thyself more than Thy service.*

4.2 What is true freedom?

You are only free when you are living and operating according to the design of your maker.

- TRAINS are only free on railway tracks. CARS are only free on the road. SHIPS are only free on the water.

A train that has gone off the rails, a car that has gone off the road, a ship that got grounded on the beach – they are the least free thing in the world.

People of today are afraid of commitment to anyone and anything. They just want the freedom to live for themselves, do what they want, go where they want to go, and be with whoever they want to be with.

- Chasing the illusive freedom, they collapse from exhaustion from their 'freedom'.
- Admission of sorrow and exhaustion from a young man who had 100+ girls.
- This selfish freedom is a self-made prison – imprisoned with themselves.

You are the one person you cannot get away from! It is torturous enslavement to the cruel dictator within – your flesh controlled by sin and devil.

- The only way out of this slavery is to change your master. You become a slave of Christ, and you find true freedom to be what God has purposed you to be.

4.3 What is Meekness?

Jesus said, 'Learn from me for I am meek and lowly of heart. Take my yoke, it is easy. Take my burden, it is light.'

- Meekness is not weakness. It is the human will that is submitted to the higher will of God and His purpose.

It is like breaking a wild horse – training the horse to accept a saddle, a bridle, and the weight of the rider on his back.

What does it take to train a warhorse? The horse will only obey the master's direction, and not react to smoke, flying bullets, or noise.

- Likewise, we are to take up Jesus' yoke and His burden meant for us. Otherwise, someone else will put their hard yoke and heavy burden on you.

Later we see Joseph dealing with his brothers in Egypt, who did not recognise their little brother who became the PM of Egypt.

- Joseph is strong but not brutal. He is tender, but not compromising.
- He tests his brothers until they demonstrate - their care for their old FATHER Jacob, their fight to protect BENJAMIN their youngest brother, born of Rachel, and their acknowledgment of their SIN against Joseph.
- When the brothers beg for Joseph's mercy after their father Jacob dies, he weeps for them, 'You sold me, but God sent me,' and assures them he will take care of them and their children.

5 Joseph's Blessing

5.1 Birthright of the Firstborn Goes to Joseph

1 Chr 5 ¹ Now the sons of **Reuben the firstborn of Israel—he was indeed the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright;** ² yet **Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came a ruler, although the birthright was Joseph's—**

- Kings come from Judah, from the line of David – Christ comes from this line.
- But the double portion of the birthright goes to Joseph, NOT because he was the firstborn of Rachel, the wife Jacob loved, but because God's word PROVED him TRUE.

Gen 49 ²² "Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall. ²³ The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him. ²⁴ But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob.

- When the archers – his brothers, His stepmothers, Potiphar's household slaves, Potiphar's wife, Pharaoh's court officials - shot at him with jealousy and hate.
- He doesn't cut and run, but grows and climbs over the wall and beyond into the holy place of God's calling and purpose for his life.

Joseph gets the double portion of the firstborn - His two sons Ephraim and Manasseh inherit the double portion of the promised land.

- Joshua and Samuel are Ephraimites – two powerful figures in Israel's history. Joshua took over from Moses, and Samuel was the transition prophet whose words never fell to the ground. He anointed the first two kings of Israel and took the nation from the era of Judges to the era of Kings.

5.2 His Father's Blessing

Gen 49 ²² "Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall.

²³ The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him.

²⁴ But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),

²⁵ By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

²⁶ The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.

They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.

I am the Lord, Your Maker. I am making you.

- I encourage us to yield to the hand of God shaping us and making us.