

Lessons from the Life of Joseph Part 1

“1 And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. 5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. 8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. 9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. 10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.” (Genesis 37:1-11 KJV)

“1 And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.” (Genesis 37:1 KJV) Jacob was dwelling in the land of Canaan as a stranger like his fathers, Isaac and Abraham, because that was not their land at that time. Therefore Joseph was also living in that land as a stranger. **The same for us now, we are strangers on earth because our place is in Heaven and we need to live such a life that when Jesus would come, we are ready to go with Him to Heaven. Therefore we shouldn't be intermingling with civilian affairs but living in holiness, a life of service and ministry unto God, doing His will and achieving His purpose in our lives, that we are ready to meet Him in the air when He would be coming to take us as we read here, “13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thessalonians 5:13-18 KJV)** So the lesson that you can learn here from the life of Joseph is the following:

- That even you live on earth, but you must not be a worldly person, and you need to free yourself from civilian affairs, and that you should not get yourself attached and fond with earthly riches like gold, jewels, lands, houses, cars, etc.

“2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.” (Genesis 37:2 KJV) Joseph at that time was seventeen years old, and just recently his mother died and left him with his father Jacob and having his brother Benjamin infant of few months. With such situation Joseph was starting to go through life, working and taking the responsibility of a man to work. He was working with his brethren who were elder and more experience than him in pasturing the flocks, which means that he needed to humble himself before them to learn from them and to listen to their instruction and work accordingly. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- You need to be a hard working, diligent, and responsible person to be productive and fruitful.
- You need to be a teachable person who is willing to learn from those who are elder than you, and more experience than you in life.
- You need to be humble, to respect, to listen and to submit to those who are elder than you and ahead of you in the profession.

We have read in verse 2, *“and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.”* Joseph was with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father concubines. Their sons as we know were jealous of Joseph because his father was favoring him more than them, but that did not affect him and made him having ill feeling toward them, which is a good lesson we learn from the life of Joseph.

- Learn to be neutral in your feeling and attitude toward those who are jealous of you and deal with them professionally and don't let their ill treatment to you change you and give you ill feeling toward them.

Joseph was bringing their evil report to his father not because he was having ill feeling toward them but he was doing that because that what he needed to do, to report to the higher authority the wrong doing of others in order to secure the welfare to those who had put their trust on him. Someone else other than Joseph would keep silent and would not report to his father their wrong doings to avoid a conflict with them but that would be a betrayer of trust toward his father, and non willingness to stand for the truth and non willingness to be persecuted. In addition the wrong doings that his brothers were doing would not be stopped and ultimately will bring to them much harm. Joseph was willing to face sin in order for his father to deal with it. He might even spoke to his brethren before he reported them to his father, and perhaps when they did not respond to him then that was the time he escalated it to the higher level. In the New Testament we have the teaching of Jesus that when we witness a brother sin against us that we need to face him on a personal level, *“15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.” (Matthew 18:15 KJV)* But even if the person sin against God and you witness that, then still you need to do your responsibility and speak to that person for we are called to bring a difference. According to the teaching of Jesus in dealing with a brother

who sin against you that if he would not respond to the correction then you need to get others involved in such and if he will not listen then the church finally needed to get involved. ***“16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” (Matthew 18:16-17 KJV)*** Therefore based on this teaching and what we observed from the life of Joseph, the following lessons can be concluded:

- Be an accountable person to the trust that had been given to you from the authority that is over you. Be a responsible person to God to bring holiness in the place that God had put you.
- You need to be loyal to the authority over you more than to those who are under them and to be good watchman and report to them what you need to report to them from evil that would bring harm to the authority and to those under them.
- Be strong and courageous and don't be afraid from persecution when you stand for the truth.

There is no mention of what evil they were doing, but some Jewish resources say that they were doing immoralities. ***Now when Joseph reported them sure they hated him for that, but he needed to do such because first for their sake so they would stop of doing such sins and got cleansed and saved, and second for the sake of the trust that he had from his father, and third for the good testimony of their whole family that they needed to keep the holy living, and lastly and above all was to maintain the fear of God and to bring His wrath far away from them.***

- Reflect now that in your life and see how you are accountable to do your part first toward God, second toward the people who are sinning, third for the sake of the people over you who had given their trust to you and forth for the sake of the society and the people that you are living with that you need to keep holiness as good testimony for them that they may see and follow.

“3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.” (Genesis 37:3-4 KJV) Now here the situation of Joseph that he was born with: His mother was dead, and he was loved by his father because he was almost the last before his brother Benjamin, and he was born to his father Jacob in his old age from his second wife Rachel. Jacob's first wife was Leah, but he insisted to marry Rachel because he was in love with her, and after his marriage she was not having children, and so when Joseph was born he was born after the birth of all his brethren from the other wives of his father, and so his father's love to him was part of his love to Rachel, which made him love Joseph more than all his children. And because he was the son of his old age Jacob made him a special coat of many colors. But when his brethren from the other three wives of his father saw and noticed that Jacob their father loved him in such a way they hated him for that and they did not speak in a peaceful way with him. The situation of Joseph here although he had lost his mother but he had the love and the care of his father that would help him in his life. So he had certain troubles and deficient

things in his life but he had other privileges that are of help and support to him. I am not telling that he would take advantage of the favor of his father to him and that he would use it to oppress his brethren, but to enjoy what his father was giving him and needed to continue to be humble and do his part and responsibilities in life to achieve the purpose of God. Joseph accepted the scenario that God had placed him in and cooperated with God and continued his life to please God. ***We are also in the same situation; every one of us has certain difficulties and hardships, but we have the love of God our Father that He had bestowed on us, therefore we need to accept the scenarios that God had placed us in and continue to serve God and do what pleases Him.*** Therefore you can learn the following lessons from the life of Joseph:

- Continue to be humble and do the responsibilities that God had laid on you in this life and to achieve it.
- Don't take advantage from others and start to boast over them by the privileges that God had given to you.
- Don't be discouraged by the life's setup that God had placed you in, but accept the scenario that God had placed you in and remember also that God had given you other privileges that can compensate what you lack and the difficulty that you are in.

“5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. 8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.” (Genesis 37:5-8 KJV) Here Joseph God had bestowed on him the gifts of seeing dreams. God was directing his life by showing him dreams of what would take place in the future. The meaning of the dream that God gave to Joseph is that one day he would be over his brothers even he was the younger, and he would be mightier than they and well provided than they and they would come and be under him and he will have dominion over them. When Joseph declared the dream to them his purpose was to convey to them what God had revealed to him. Joseph was honest with his brethren and responsible before God and that was why he declared to his brethren the dream that God showed him. He was not boasting over his brethren in telling them the dream that God showed him, and not out of his desire to rule over them and to dominate them. But he was truthful to them in declaring to them what would take place in the future. As well as Joseph took the dream in a positive way and accepted it that one day he needed to serve and help his elder brothers even though they hated him. But his brethren took that dream in a negative way and they hated him. Joseph was aware that they would hate him but he preferred to be persecuted than to hide the truth and what God had revealed to him. **** In the same way God sure would give us dreams to show us what is next to come and we need to declare them to the people around us. * And sure God would give us spiritual gifts and these gifts are needed for us in our lives and ministry unto God and we need to use them in our lives as God is directing us how to use them. * Therefore we need to use them to serve others and not to boast over them. * We need to be like Joseph willing to help, be persecuted and give service to even those who would hate us. * Someone would say that Joseph needed not to declare those dreams to his***

brethren to avoid persecution, but such view is against the will of God and we should not adopt such attitude in our lives and ministries. Therefore you can learn the following lessons from the life of Joseph:

- Be courageous to declare to the people what God had revealed to you in dreams or visions.
- Be willing to use the spiritual gifts that God had given you to serve others and to do your part fully as God is directing you to do and to be.
- Be humble and do not use the spiritual gifts that God had given you to boast over the people.
- Don't hide the truth, but be willing to stand for God and be willing even to be hated and persecuted by the people whom you are willing to help and serve.

“9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. 10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.” (Genesis 37:9-11 KJV) Here God showed him another dream which shows that his extended responsibility in the future was not only toward his brethren but even to his father and the rest of the family members and that what truly happened in the future. Although in the dream showed that the eleven stars which were his eleven brothers, and the sun and the moon, which were his father and mother that they would come and bow down to him, but he was not afraid or intimidated to declare that dream to his brethren and to his father, because that what God had showed him and that what would take place. Therefore Joseph out of his faith declared the dream to them, and out of his willingness to take the responsibility announced to them the dream, which was a warning for them to heed and to behave and walk with God, not only to his brethren but as well as to his father and his wives, and to cleanse themselves of whatever sin, especially their immoralities, idol worship, envy, jealousy, etc, otherwise the judgment of God was coming and would fall on them. The brethren of Joseph envied him for the dream that he told them, because of how God was revealing to him these things and they would also see the favor of God on him. But his father observed the saying, because being an experienced man in life, he might be aware that God would fulfill all such things in the future. **In the same way we need to have faith in God that whatever He would reveal to us that He would do it and therefore we need to declare it to the people, even if they will envy us, hate us and trouble us, but the most important for us is to please God and to do our part toward Him well as He wanted us to do it, trusting God that He will also let some people to observe and keeps what we had spoken to them.** Therefore you can learn the following lessons from the life of Joseph:

- Have faith in God, and declare to the people whatever He is revealing to you because He would fulfill that in the coming future.
- Don't be afraid or intimidated by the people, even if they will hate you, envy you or trouble you, the most important is that you please God and do what He asked you to do, trusting God that He will stir the heart of some people to observe and keep what you had spoken to them.

My dear and beloved: The Hebrew meaning of Joseph is ‘**Jehovah has added**’. God today added to us several of good lessons from the life of Joseph. **Let us come now to God pondering on all those good lessons that we had received from Him from the life of Joseph, that we may apply them in our lives and take heed of all the warning that we received from them and taking the responsibility to achieve all what God wants us to achieve in our lives, and setting the good example to others to follow Him.**

Let us renounce our sins and come to Him in repentance. Let us renounce all our shortcomings so that we can live in holiness and set the correct standard to others to follow God and His Christ.

Let us have the attitude to accept correction and rebukes so we can be sound in faith and start to understand our responsibilities and our assignments toward God, toward our families, toward God's church, toward our work, toward one another and toward the world around us.

Let us accept the trials and the hardships that God allows us to pass through, so we can grow, and our attitude would be perfected, having patient and long suffering and be well prepared to do the very Word of God to go on forward to preach the Gospel of Jesus and make disciples and be fruitful in our walk with God. Let us pray

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from death on the third day to give us eternal life. Lord I thank you for your clear Word to me that explains to me the situation that I am passing through and the scenario that you had ordained for me to live my life. Lord thank you for all the material and the spiritual blessings and the privileges that I had received from you. Lord thank you for your rebukes, the corrections and the admonishments that I received from your Word. Lord I accept them because I know that you had sent this Word in order to make me a better person.*

Let us confess and renounce our sins. Confess and repent of your immature and irresponsible behaviors. Confess and renounce your lack of faith and trust in God. Confess and renounce your self-pity and your non willingness to accept the scenario of life that God had placed you in. Repent of your fear of man, and your non willingness to face people with the truth of God's Word and what He is revealing to you. Repent of your non willingness to do God's will and the plan that He ordained for you to go through. Repent of your non willingness to go through hard work, and training under people who are more experience than you. Repent of your pride, arrogance and non teachable attitude. Repent of your lust and immoralities. Repent of your envy and jealousy. Repent of withholding yourself and non willingness to offer yourself, your life, your gifts and skills and all the material you have to God. Repent of your non willingness to serve God and suffer and get persecuted for His sake. Repent of your bad example to others. Repent of your lack of reading God's Word and your lack of prayers. Repent of your yoke with non believers and wasting your time on the Media, News and games. Lord I am coming back to you, I repent and turn away from the following sins _____, lord forgive me and receive me in your kingdom.

Lord I commit myself to all the lessons and the instructions that we received from the life of Joseph, and to have all the characters of hard working, being a responsible person, courageous, humble, persevering, willing to suffer and persecuted in order to tell the truth to others and to what you want me to convey to them. Lord I trust you that you will help me in my life and you will deliver me from all my struggles. Lord I commit myself to love you, to love your Word, to love to serve you and to love the ministry and the people that you are asking me to serve. Lord I commit myself to be good example to others to follow you. Lord protect me from persecution, sustain me and provide for me to continue to serve you.

Lord I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who had repented of their sins and are willing to humble down and walk in your ways and follow the good example of Joseph and the teaching we received in this message. Lord comfort them from all their troubles provide their daily needs and protect them from their enemies. Lord fill them once again with the Holy Spirit so they can go and do your work and your will, to accomplish the purpose of yours in their lives.

Lord I pray for us as a church to go on in serving you and do your work and your will. Lord let your Word for us today in this message transform us, and make us good example for others to follow you like what Joseph did. Lord help us as a church to do the very genuine, the authentic and the pure things that you want us to do to honor you and do the works of yours faithfully; that will be remembered and last forever. Lord refill us once again with the Holy Spirit, and lead us and enable us to reach new people, making new disciples and training new workers, and to plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord I pray for more people to be water baptized, and receives the Holy Spirit baptism. Lord bless and increase all our ministries, and prepare us for your coming that we will go with you when you come to take us. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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