

Lessons from the Life of Joseph Part 2

“12 And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. 14 And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.” (Genesis 37:12-14)

In this passage that we had read we are informed that the brethren of Joseph, the tenth of them went to feed their father's flock in Shechem, which was in distance around 96 kilometers from Hebron where Jacob was residing with his father Isaac. Here Jacob called Joseph and told him as introduction that his brethren were feeding in Shechem, and he called him to come that he will send him to them. When Joseph heard that his father wanted to send him to Shechem at once he replied, **“Here am I”**; at once he showed his willingness to go there. Joseph did not do bad expression like ‘Oh, why me, Oh, I am tired, Oh, I have back ache, Oh, I am not feeling well.’ Joseph was a diligent person and willing to do the works that his father wanted him to do and all the assignment that was laid on him. Joseph was so concerned about his brethren and concerned with what his father had asked him to do. Joseph was not a lazy person and was not a man of excuses to escape his responsibilities. His father commissioned him to go and see the wellbeing of his brethren and the wellbeing of the flock with them, that he needed to go as watchman to see the situation of his brethren and the flock with them and then to return to bring the report that his father wanted to hear from him. Upon the willingness of Joseph, his father sent him in that mission to look for their wellbeing and to report back to his him. He went travelling all that long distant by walking. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- You need to be ready at all times to do your assignments and what you ought to do.
- You need to be diligent person to achieve the task that you had asked to do.
- You need to be a person who is concern about the wellbeing of others and especially your brethren in faith as Joseph was.
- You need to be concern to the work of God that He entrusted to you as Joseph was concerned to the works that his father had asked him to do and as Jesus was concerned to come from Heaven to look and seek and search for the lost.
- Get rid of all your laziness and get rid of all your excuses to escape the hard works of God.
- Be ready to travel and move to the mission's field with whatever facility available to attend to the task that is entrusted to you in order to finish it.
- Be willing to be a faithful watchman or watchwoman to report to the church leadership what you ought to report to them from details about the ministry and the details of the lives of people around us and under our care.

“15 And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? 16 And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. 17 And the man said, They are departed

hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.” (Genesis 37:15-17 KJV) Joseph when he reached there he was not able to find them, because they were not there. But Joseph did not give up, and he was wandering in that field of Shechem trying to find them and to trace where they went. He did not go back and said to his father I did not find them, but he continued to search. Many when you send them, they will wait for the first difficulty to make it their excuse to drop what God had asked them to do. But Joseph from inside was burning with passion to locate and find his brothers. And God who knew what was in his heart helped him to achieve that; God made a man noticed him and who asked him what he was seeking, and Joseph answered him and said to him that he was seeking his brethren, and asked him where he could find them feeding their flocks, and indeed the man answered him and said unto him that they had departed for he had heard them saying to one another to go to Dothan, the land of wells. Therefore in hearing such Joseph did not go back to his father and reported to him that they were not in Shechem but he continued his journey from Shechem to Dothan which was a distance of 19 kilometers from Shechem, and God made his journey successful as he found them in Dothan. Joseph was like Jesus, who came from Heaven, sent by His father to seek and save the lost. He came to seek His people the Israelites, and he faced difficulties but he was not turn off by any of such until he accomplished his task and died on the cross to save us from sin and death. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- You need not to give up with the obstacles in front of you to do the task that was entrusted to you by God, but to continue doing it using all the possible options in your hand to accomplish it.
- Get rid of all your excuses and using the obstacles as your reason to give up.
- As you persevere in that God will make a way to guide you and will send people to help you in this matter and will give you the needed information for that.
- Be like Jesus, continue in your task until you finish and complete your assignment.

“18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. 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.” (Genesis 37:18-20 KJV) His brethren when they saw from a far distance as he was walking they recognized him from his gate and they conspired against him to kill him. Imagine he traveled long distance on his feet in order to reach them, but they wanted to kill him, calling him the dreamer, because they were angry to him because of his dreams but those dreams were God gave to him for their benefits and for him to serve them well in the future. While he was hurrying to reach them, being happy that he found them, they were taking consultation among themselves to kill him and to cast him into one of the pits, or well, that were in that place and that they will say that a beast devoured him. They were planning to do that in order to make an end of his dreams which were speaking about them to be under him. Joseph his brethren that his father sent him to serve them they were angry and in rage against him, full of jealousy and wanted even to end up his life to make an end of his dreams that were torturing to them. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- It is normal that the very people that you are serving, guided with the visions or the dreams that God had given you, are the very people who hate you, angry to you, jealous of you, hating your service and ministry, and wanting to end up your life.
- Since that is normal, then you need to continue to obey God and continue your service and ministry to serve the people and God's purpose in their lives, trusting Him that He will protect you from them and let you pass the scenario that He had ordained for you to go through.
- Follow the example of Joseph and do not bypass the trial that you are asked to pass through.
- Follow the example of Jesus and do not bypass the cross that God is asking you to go through.

“21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. 22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.” (Genesis 37:21-22 KJV) Reuben the eldest brother heard about what they were discussing between themselves, while Joseph was still on the way towards them, and he wanted to free him from their hands, so he told them that they should not shed his blood but instead they can cast him in a pit which he pointed out to them that he may die there spontaneously, possibly because of hunger, thirst and cold weather, and no need for them to kill him, and this he said to them in order that he might take him from their hands later on in order to bring him back again to his father. This most likely Reuben wanted to do as a favor for his father that he can get his favor again that would cover the offence that he did against his father in sleeping with his wife Bilhah, the handmaid of Rachel. He was not after Joseph but after himself using Joseph for his own benefits. Joseph was in the mid of such atmosphere but that did not affect him nor made him upset nor affected his commitment and his trust toward God. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Never put your trust on people. They may use you only for their own benefits. But rather put your trust on God alone who is always there for you.
- God may use people to help you, but even those whom God use to help you, God does not want you to put your trust on them..

“23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; 24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. 25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.” (Genesis 37:23-25 KJV) Sure he was happy when he came and arrived to his brethren. Sure he was hungry and thirsty when he arrived to his brethren and was expecting hospitality and refreshments from them. Sure he was excited to see them and was expected that they would be happy to receive him. But all these expectation did not take place, but the worse scenario took place. First they removed his many colored coat from him that was given by his father, to express their great jealousy from him as he was distinguished by his father. Second they took him and casted him into a nearby pit, perhaps the one that Reuben had suggested to them, which

had no water so he would die spontaneously by himself by the cold of the night because his lack of covering coat and by hunger due to lack of the food and drink. He went there to serve them and to bring their report and the flock with them to their father, but they treated him in a very bad way and expressed their jealousy and vent their anger toward him. He was like Christ who came to seek for his own people, but his people conspired against Him and put Him to death. They threw him into the pit while they sat down to eat and drink, as if he was not a human they threw into a pit and as if he was not their brother. The Scripture informs us that Joseph was pleading for his life from them but they gave him their deaf ears, they were full of hatred, revenge and anger toward him. The following is the confession of his brothers about the anguish of his soul when he was pleading for his life from them, ***“21 And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.” (Genesis 42:21 KJV)*** But they did not respond to him. He was thinking after he would meet them he would go back to his father but God had for him another scenario and he needed to go through it. Therefore you can learn the following lessons from the life of Joseph:

- Don't put your expectation on the people. They may do to you the worse scenario. Even don't put your expectation on those whom you are serving, because they may do to you the ever worse that can be done, as the people did to Joseph and did to our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Don't think of it to be something strange if you are betrayed as Joseph was betrayed because that is usual for the human nature.
- Accept the worse scenario that God allowed you to pass through. It is useless to plead with people, the scenario would not change, therefore you need to surrender your will to God and bear the crisis that God allowed you to pass through in order to serve His purpose.

“25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. 26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.” (Genesis 37:25-28 KJV) When they saw the company of the Ishmeelites and the Medianites merchantmen, Judah spoke and said to them, that there was no benefit to kill him and to hide his blood, so he suggested to them that they will sell him to those people who would take him into Egypt and in such way his life and influence would be far away from them. So indeed they sold him with twenty pieces of silver, and sure they divided the money between them and they would conceal his story. Judah was moved by the love of money as Judah Iscariot was moved by the love of money to betray Jesus. Judah was moved by his love for money to make a profit out of the life of Joseph. But God used the greediness of the both Judah, the one in link with Joseph and the one in link with Jesus to serve His own purpose and will. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Never put your trust on people. They may use you only for their own benefits. But rather put your trust on God alone who is always there for you.
- God may use people to help you, but even those whom God use to help you, God does not wants you to put your trust on them.

“29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. 30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? 31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;” (Genesis 37:29-31 KJV) Reuben when he did not find Joseph in the pit was frustrated not because his concern about Joseph but his concern about the deal that he would loss with his father. So he returned to his brethren, whom sure told him of what they did. But as they resorted to take the coat of Joseph and kid of the goats and dipped the coat in the blood it means all agreed to hide his blood and sure the twenty pieces of silver they got from his sale divided between the ten of them, so two pieces was for each of them. Therefore the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Events of life will expose to you the real nature of the people and the wrong motive of their outward good behaviors.
- In spite of all such, God shall use all such things to accomplish His purpose and His will in your life.

“32 And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. 33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. 34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. 35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.” (Genesis 37:32-35 KJV) Hatred, jealousy, anger, and revenge had blinded their eyes and darkened their minds and pushed them to do a crime, not only against Joseph their brother, but as well as against Jacob their father, who was shocked with that event and the bad news that they conveyed to him. Years and years Jacob believed on their faked story and believed that his son was dead. Jacob trusted them and believed on them without seeing the proof, the dead body of Joseph. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- In such circumstances you do not need to believe what the people is saying if there is no clear proof of that.

“36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.” (Genesis 37:32-35 KJV) Joseph was betrayed, sold and presented as a dead person to his father. His soul was shattered of what he had passed through from terror by his brothers. He left behind his father who loved him, his younger brother who was one year old and without mother, and his grandfather Isaac. But Joseph went further forward to the next chapter of his life, being seventeen years old, passed from the land of Canaan to the land of Egypt, to a new land, a new country, and to a new different people with different faith, different culture, different language, different kinds

of habits, food and dress, to continue his life and the scenario that God had ordained for him to go through. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Whatever the circumstances that you are passing through, forget the past and look forward to the new scene and the episode that God is transmitting you to in order to achieve His purpose and His will in your life.
- Whatever the circumstances that you are passing through, do not focus on your wound and on what you left behind, trusting that God can heal you and can handle all the misery that was left behind you.
- Trust God that he is with you, He will neither leave you nor forsake you and He is accompanying you to the new stage of your life that He wants you to pass through.

My dear and beloved: 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 be willing to do the mission's work of God and be willing to be watchmen and watchwomen who are willing to report exactly to the church leadership to what we are required to report from details about the ministry and about the details of the lives of people around us and under our care.

Let us persevere in life and accept the trials and the hardships that God allows us to pass through and the scenario that he ordained for us to live, 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 not only to preach the Gospel of Jesus and make disciples and be fruitful in our walk with God, but as well as to live the Word of God, practicing faith in trials, keeping our stand and integrity in whatever unfavorable situation that God had placed us in and to be a model and set good examples to others to follow. 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 thank you for your Word that comforts me and explains to me all what I am passing through from trials in my life. Lord thank you for all the lessons that I learned in this message from the life of Joseph. Lord thank you for all the material and the spiritual blessings and the privileges that I had received from you and thank you for all the life training experiences that you allowed me to experience. Lord thank you for all your teaching, the rebukes, the corrections and the admonishments that we received from your Word.

Let us confess and renounce our sins. Confess and repent of your laziness and your various excuses to escape doing your responsibilities. Confess and renounce your non willingness to travel and suffer in doing the mission's works of God. Repent of withholding yourself and your non willingness to offer yourself, your life, your gifts and skills and all the materials you have to God. Confess and renounce your non willingness

to suffer persecution. Confess and renounce your lack of faith and your lack of full trust in God. Confess and renounce your wrong motive behind doing good things. Confess and renounce your greediness and love of money. Confess and renounce your jealousy, anger, hatred, revenge and telling lies. Repent of your non willingness to do God's will and the plan that He ordained for you to go through. 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 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 having love toward my enemies, willing to suffer and get persecuted for God, willing to travel and accomplish perfectly the mission's work of God. Lord I commit myself to be good example to others to follow you. Lord I trust you that you will help me in my life and you will deliver me from all my struggles and from my enemies who are persecuting me. Lord sustain me, give me good health and continue provide for me to continue to serve you.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who had repented of their sins and who committed themselves to 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 save them out and deliver them from those who are persecuting them. Lord sustain them and continue to provide their daily needs. Lord fill them once again with the Holy Spirit and give them the courage and the perseverance to continue their ministries and the mission's works that you entrusted to them in order to accomplish and perfect your purpose 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 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 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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