

Lessons from the Life of Joseph Part 10

“45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt. 46 And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. 47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. 48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. 49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.” (Genesis 41:45-49 KJV)

Immediately as Joseph took his new post on that day that he left the prison, and became the first man after Pharaoh, he started to do his assignment. Even he was newly married but that did not hinder him to do the task that God wanted him to do. Somebody else will use that to excuse himself from doing the task of God as in the parable of Jesus, *“20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.” (Luke 14:20 KJV)* On that day, Joseph was set free from his prison, he got his new post, he got married from Asenath, and he started immediately the task to collect the harvest and to store it; not only because Joseph was diligent but that was the first day of the starting of the seven years of plenty and he needed to waste no time to collect and store so when the seven years of famine would start he would be ready for such. For someone else a lazy fellow would postpone and procrastinate, which is very wrong. Why? Because the day that Joseph would fail to collect food and store then when the famine start then he would find he was lacking a supply of one day. Joseph was wise and he would not do such a mistake. Sure Joseph was not only doing his assignment well but also he did not neglect his duty toward his wife and family. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Be a wise man with understanding and don't miss the opportunity to do your task and assignment that was laid on you to do.
- Be diligent and not a lazy fellow who want to enjoy life and privileges and neglect his main assignment that he needed to do.
- Be in balance and do all what is required from you toward God, toward your family, your wife and children, the church, your ministry, your work, your nation, the people around you and the society that you live in.

“47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. 48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. 49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.” (Genesis 41:47-49 KJV) What Joseph explained to Pharaoh in the dream come true and the land gave handfuls and plenty of harvest during the seven years of plenty.

Joseph previously explained to Pharaoh the need to establish a reserve or store of food that the country shall not perish during the time of famine, *“36 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.” (Genesis 41:36 KJV)* and this we can call a strategic reserve. **In terms of stable financial status we need to prepare and have the following categories of resources in order to establish our strategic reserve:**

- **Category 1:** We need to have a regular amount of money for daily living.
- **Category 2:** We need to have a regular amount of money to deal with urgent situations and states of emergency that arise in life.
- **Category 3:** We need to have a good amount of money on hand as a reserve for the future. This we can call as the strategic reserve that will be used so that the families and the church will not perish during the time of severe famine.

All the members, workers, and families in the church, as well as the church treasury, should be trained and be prepared so that they have all the three categories of resources.

From *Genesis 41:46-49* you can get ideas for developing strategic reserve from the life of Joseph from the points mentioned below:

1. Diligence from a young age: When Joseph was just thirty, he started to collect for the strategic reserve. *“46 And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt.” (Genesis 41:46 KJV)* **We need to teach and train our children and disciples to begin saving from their young age.**

2. Use the opportunity to collect in the time of plenty: *“47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.” (Genesis 41:47 KJV)* **Many people waste the resources in the time of plenty, without being aware that their resources sooner or later will be exhausted. Be a good steward and never loss resources during the time of plenty.**

3. Maintain a high level of discipline and show commitment in the task assigned: Joseph collected a portion of the grain that the earth brought forth for seven long years. *“48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.” (Genesis 41:48 KJV)* **As long as there was plenty, Joseph collected the grain with true commitment and gladness, operating under the wisdom of God.**

4. Exercise perseverance in doing every task in every place that is accessible: During those seven years, Joseph collected all the excess food in the land of Egypt and stored it in the cities. In every city, he laid up the food from the fields around it. *“48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.” (Genesis 41:48 KJV)* **We need to continue to motivate every member, worker, and family in the church to adopt that same attitude. In addition to that, in the church treasury, a reserve should be kept.**

5. Never get deceived by times of plenty and stop collecting: *“49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.” (Genesis 41:49 KJV)* When there was plenty around Joseph and the blessings were overflowing, he was not deceived by the thought, *‘There is so much, why I should attempt to collect to save?’* And some will add this statement, *‘Anyway, it is always there; when I need it, I will take it.’* Many people will not collect and save because they can see that there is plenty and they will not believe that one day, and even overnight the plenty will go away. Joseph was not deceived with the plenty that he was seeing in front of his eyes in the whole seven years of plenty, because he was sure that the famine shall come on time and will not delay. I believe that this is one of the most common reasons given by people who do not want to save because there is plenty in front of their eyes, but they are not aware that the plenty simply may vanish from in front of their eyes just overnight.

Diligently Joseph gathered all the food of the seven years of plenty whether corn, wheat or barley; he gathered the fifth of the harvest in all the cities; each city he gathered from its field which was around it. Joseph needed to store the food in a proper way so that it would be kept until it would be used after seven years, for the food that would be gathered on the first year would be used on the eighth year and the food that would be gathered on the seventh year to be used on the fourteenth year. That required from Joseph to build store houses and would use skills to store the food properly that would be not spoiled nor eaten by pests.

So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Whatever you are going to speak from God’s Word the Lord shall fulfill it. Therefore be confident and continue to preach the Word of God.
- Put in your mind that you establish a strategic reserve for your finances including that you have finances for your daily expenses, for your emergencies and good amount of money on hand as a reserve for the future. This we can call as the strategic reserve that will be used so that your family and the ministry under your care shall not perish during the time of severe famine.
- Be a wise man with understanding and don’t miss the opportunity to do your task and assignment that was laid on you to do.
- Be diligent and not a lazy fellow who want to enjoy life and privileges and neglect his main assignment that he needed to do.
- Be diligent at all times to do this task of God to save and build this strategic reserve, especially in your young age and even when you are old.
- Be diligent to teach your children and disciples to do the same from their young age as they start to work and earn money.
- Use the opportunity to collect in the time of plenty. Be a good steward and never loss resources during the time of plenty so that your stores shall not be exhausted. Maintain a high level of discipline and show commitment in the task assigned. As long as there is plenty, continue to collect with true commitment and gladness, operating under the wisdom of God.
- Exercise perseverance in doing every task in every place that is accessible to you in order to save. You need to continue to motivate every one of your

children and disciples and every member of the congregation under your care to adopt and do the same.

- Be creative and use skills in order to preserve resources and protect them from damages and dangers.
- Use wisdom and cut cost by reuse, recycle, and repair in order to save.
- Never get deceived by times of plenty and stop collecting because the plenty that you are seeing today may be no more tomorrow and disappear overnight.

“53 And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. 54 And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.” (Genesis 41:53-54 KJV)

Sooner or later the plenty will cease and God will test every one according to what he did in his stewardship. God would allow famine to come and be severe to see clearly who would have savings. And that happened when God sent the famine at the time of Joseph; in all lands, the famine was evident except in Egypt because Joseph worked hard for seven years. Joseph passed the test in flying colors in the eyes of God, therefore let’s strive to follow in his footsteps so we will also pass the test in flying colors. Those who live in constant discipline and perseverance will be differentiated by God from the wasteful ones through His famines; their good stewardships will speak for them. Injustice, corruption, and wickedness may disallow faithful people from being commended and recognized, but faithfulness in their stewardships will finally overcome all the evil work against them. So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Be ready when God would come with His famine to judge your stewardship and the works of your hand during the time of plenty.
- Be sure that God shall allow such famine to test your stewardship therefore be ready and start to prepare yourself even from now.
- Live in constant discipline and persevere and be sure that God shall differentiate you from those wasteful ones through His famines.
- Your good stewardships will speak for you inspite of all injustice, corruption, and wickedness around you. Your good stewardship would finally overcome all such evil works against you.

“55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.” (Genesis 41:55 KJV) Joseph certainly stood out in the crowd when the famine came upon the land of Egypt. Pharaoh directed all the people who came to him during the famine to go to Joseph and to do what he would tell them to do. Not only those who are good stewards will truly be honored and will be most sought after in time of scarcity, but also they will be a source of relief and blessing to others who have nothing to eat. God will allow hardships and trials to pass on all people; the unfaithful will be caught with their dishonest stewardships, but the faithful stewards will glow and shine. Hence, let us understand that there is no escape from hardships and trials but it is your perseverance and constancy to save and with God’s wisdom you will be able to go through.

“56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.” (Genesis 41:56 KJV) The famine was over all the face of the earth, so there was no other place for the Egyptians to go but to Joseph. Therefore Joseph sold to the Egyptians what he had kept in reserve in the storehouses. So he received a payment for the grain he sold. So here we can see that Joseph did not lose what he saved for nothing, but he replaced them with money. He might bought that food with cheap prices but now sure he sold with expensive ones during the famine. **Those who save and store will not incur a loss during times of scarcity, instead, they will receive a resourceful income.** Joseph was a source of blessing to the whole land of Egypt and he was a big help to the people in times of severe scarcity and we must also be the same. **Those who think to save are highly responsible people who can help other people around them, as Joseph helped the Egyptians.**

“57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.” (Genesis 41:57 KJV) Not only Egypt benefitted from God’s great project that He had initiated through Joseph, a man of diligence and discipline in whom the Spirit of God was, but also other nations benefitted. **The church that keeps savings and also teaches members and the families to do the same will soon extend her influence to other nations.**

So the lessons that you can learn here from the life of Joseph are the following:

- Trust God that all your works would be rewarded when God would send His judgment and judge the wicked and vindicate you and lift you up.
- You will be a source of blessing to other people around you when you are in good stewardship to the resources that God had given to you.
- Even during the time of famines if you had been good steward during the time of plenty then even during the time of famines your resources and stores will not be depleted.
- Your good example in stewardship would be a blessing to your family, the congregation that you are in and the church.
- You will be a source of blessing not only to the country and to the nation that you are in but would extend beyond and would reach to other nations.

My dear and beloved: “1 Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? 2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.” (Genesis 42:1-2 KJV) Finally the family of Jacob moved to Egypt due to the famine in Canaan and the availability of food in Egypt, thanks to Joseph for his wise stewardship. This event resulted in the reunion of Joseph with his brothers and particularly his brother Benjamin and Jacob his father. All of them came to live in the land of Egypt upon the invitation of Joseph to share in the plenty in the midst of famine. **So we can conclude that good stewardship, wise using of the resources and saving may also be instrumental in rebuilding families and uniting them.**

Now the time had come for you to humble yourself before God and before His Word and be willing to respond to the teaching we received in this message and start to organize

yourself in order to be able to use the plenty that God is giving you and start to save the fifth of it in a systematic way so you can be ready for any famine that may come in the future. The time for you is to be diligent, organized, working with faith to achieve the good plan that God has for you, for your family, for your ministry, for the congregation that you are in and for God’s church. 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 to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your encouraging Word that teaches me to save the one fifth of all what you are giving to me, and the rest of the principles of the good stewardship. Lord thank you for the plenty of resources that you had given to me that you want me to use according to your will and purpose. Lord thank you for the times of famine that you allowed to test my stewardship and to vindicate me and deliver me from my enemies. Lord thank you for all the teaching, the corrections and the admonishments that I received in this message.*

Repent and renounce all your sins. Renounce your bad stewardship and wasting your resources. Repent of your pride, arrogance, boasting and showing off. Repent of your worldliness, your love for material things and your unnecessary spending on worldly things. Repent of your stubbornness and non willingness to take warning. Repent of your bad stewardship and your non willingness to save. Confess your laziness and being not organized. Confess and renounce being bad example to others. Confess your arrogance and non willingness to go along God’s will and the plan that He has for you. Repent of doing your own will and plan and not the will nor the plan of God in your life. Repent of your non willingness to suffer for Christ and to serve Him. Repent of your yoke with non believers and wasting your time on the Media, News and games. Lord forgive me, I repent and renounce the following sins _____.

Lord I commit myself to live according to the principles that we received from your Word to be good steward, start to save and to gather the extra that you are giving me and store the fifth for the future. Lord I commit myself to be diligent and quit laziness and to use all the skills that you gave me and be creative in preserving all the resources that you are bringing to me. Lord I am willing to go through the good plan that you have for me and to build up the strategic reserve for the future. Lord I commit myself to serve you and to suffer for your cause in serving your purpose in my life and in the life of my ministry and the people around me in this nation and in other nations. Lord help me to overcome this struggle _____, this is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who accepted your Word and your will in their lives, and are willing to follow the principles that we learned in this message about saving and good stewardship from the life of Joseph. Lord help them in their lives and prepare them to be ready for the coming famines that you are going to send to judge the people. Reward their obedience and make them good examples in life and faith to others to follow you. Lord sustain them in the trials that they are passing through, give them good health and strength to continue to serve you. Lord reward them for their obedience and make their lives good testimonies for others to follow you.

Lord bless us as your church and help us to continue to implement all the teaching we received in this message about saving and good stewardship. Lord help us to continue to

train the church members, workers and the families to continue to save and manage their lives and expenses well in preparing for the future. Lord give us unity and help us to work as one team to do that. Lord lead us to teach new people those principles of today's message that they need in their lives. Lord sustain us and continue to provide for us to continue to serve you. Lord lead us to evangelize, to make new disciples, to train new workers, and to plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord take the message and spread it to reach the rest of the church congregations and people who need to hear your Word. Lord prepare us for your coming that we will go with you when you come to take us. Lord I pray for more people to be water baptized, and receives the Holy Spirit baptism. 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.

Dr. Ramiz Khalaf
The Church Overseer
Church of God
United Arab Emirates
Email: thebread1@gmail.com
Mobile Tel #: [00971551902647](tel:00971551902647)

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