

Rising Like Joseph

From chapter 11 (“Dream Again”) of John Eckhardt’s new book, *You Shall Recover All*

Even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

—PSALM 105:17–19

Joseph’s gift of dream interpretation was one of the things that caused him to prosper and rise to the place where God intended for him to go. Joseph was the victim of envy, hatred, and jealousy from his brothers. They even tried to kill him, but he was spared. He was the victim of lies. His integrity was attacked to the point that he found himself in prison. Yet, Joseph was a good steward and a good servant. He served his master faithfully. He was honest. He was a man of integrity. He was good looking, which got him in the trouble with Potiphar’s wife.

Joseph was approximately seventeen years old when he was taken into Egypt by the company of Ishamelites on their way to Egypt. (See Genesis 37:23–36). So, he was a teenager when he ended up in Potiphar’s house. After being falsely accused of raping Potiphar’s wife, Joseph spent thirteen years in prison. By the time he stood before Pharaoh, interpreted his dream, and was promoted to second in command of all of Egypt, Joseph was thirty years old. Talk about time and process. Talk about deferred hope and delayed justice. Can you wait thirteen years for vindication? Can you wait thirteen years for your hopes and dreams to manifest? Can you endure the lies, betrayal, wrongful imprisonment, and judgment while you wait?

You may be in a season now where it feels like whatever could go wrong has or will, but can you wait for the vengeance of God? Can you dare to trust and believe His prophets and the

word of the Lord that was spoken concerning your approaching time of greatness, prosperity, and promotion? I pray that you can, and that you stay built up in faith until the appointed time comes.

There are so many lessons from the life of Joseph we can learn from. I believe God put his story in Scripture so that we can benefit from it.

Is the Word of the Lord Trying You?

So imagine spending thirteen years of your life in a place of obscurity, a place away from your family. Joseph probably spent about three years in Potiphar's house and about ten years in prison. Now I believe that it was during this time that God was working to form in Joseph some important attributes. He had the word of the Lord. He had a prophetic dream. He knew what God had said, but that word was trying him.

The scripture says, "Even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him" (Ps. 105:17–19).

What does that mean? It means you can have a prophetic dream. You can have a prophetic word, and it looks like everything is going in the opposite direction. God showed Joseph that he would be in dominion his brothers. But it looks like there's no way possible for him to see the fulfillment of that dream while he is away from his family in Egypt, in Potiphar's house, then in prison. Still, he had a choice: he could hold on to that dream and believe God or he could give in to doubt and unbelief and stop dreaming altogether.

The word of the Lord will test you and try you to see whether or not you really believe, because we walk by faith and not by sight. It may start out looking like everything is going in the opposite direction of your dream, your vision, what God

has shown you for your ministry, your life, your family, your children, your business, but God has given you a prophetic dream. God has given you a prophetic word. And that word would test you, you have a choice for how you will stand up to the test: Will you believe God? Will you hold on to it? Will you walk by faith and not by sight? Will you believe? Will you not stagger at His promise? Will you give up? Will you become discouraged? Will you hold on and believe that dream, that vision, that prophetic word in spite of the way it looks? That's how God's word tries us.

So, Joseph was in prison. He was put in a place with the king's prisoners. Because he was there, he came into contact with two prisoners: Pharaoh's butler and Pharaoh's baker. One day he saw that they were sad. (See Genesis 40:6) and asked them, "Why are you so sad? Why is your countenance fallen?" And they tell 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" (Gen. 40:8).

Now we see Joseph's gift manifesting. Joseph was a dreamer. Joseph also had a gift of interpreting dreams. His gift was his ticket out of prison. Likewise, your gift is very important because your gift can actually cause you to come out of a bad situation. Your gift can cause you to be promoted and exalted.

The butler told his dream first. It was about a vine, three clusters of grapes being crushed, and put into a cup. Joseph told him that, in three days, he was going to be restored to his position as butler. Then Joseph said this: "But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house: For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon" (vv. 14-15, NKJV). In other words, he was saying, "Don't forget about me."

You Are not Forgotten

What do you do when people forget you and your plight? Ministers deal with this all the time. They can be great blessings to people, and they'll walk away from them and forget all about them that as if they never were a part of their lives. Joseph felt forsaken. The scriptures don't specify how long he had to sit in that prison, wondering what happened to the butler after he was restored.

The good news is that God did not forget about Joseph. This is what I love about this story. Even though people will forget you, God will never forget you. He'll never forsake you. God knew exactly where Joseph was. God knew exactly the timing and the season. He knew that Pharaoh was about to have a dream and the butler would remember, and even say, "I've not done right. There was a young man who interpreted my dream and I forgot about him" (Gen. 41:9-13, author's paraphrase).

I don't know whether the butler was so happy when he got out and was restored to his family and position that he just forgot about Joseph. Maybe there was a welcoming ceremony and he got so caught up into being restored until Joseph's circumstances completely left his mind. But on that day in Pharaoh's chambers, he remembered the young man who interpreted his dream.

You Will Come Out of This

Yes, Joseph did eventually come out of prison, and you, too, will come out of whatever dungeon you are in. Can you imagine what Joseph must have felt like when he got the call? Out of nowhere, he learned that Pharaoh wanted to see him. All of a sudden, he's standing before Pharaoh interpreting Pharaoh's dream. All of a sudden, a ring was put on his finger. All of a sudden, a royal garment was placed upon his shoulders. Why? Because in the lowest place in the dungeon, he let his gift operate. He helped someone. He blessed someone. He interpreted

a dream.

Are you willing to help bless other people even while you are in a low or obscure place—a place where no one sees you? A prison represents obscurity. Show me a man or woman of God who has any level of prominence, and I guarantee you, there was a time when they were hidden, forgotten. There was a time they had to preach to small numbers of people. They had to preach in living rooms or basements, small churches or storefronts to ten or twenty people. They preached in places no one knew them. They preached when no one listened to them and no one invited them to their platform, but they were faithful to use their gifts. They were faithful to be a blessing in a place of obscurity.

It's in the place of obscurity God develops us and grows our faith. He builds our character and patience. He uses our dreams and visions to test and try us. Are you in it just for the dream?

The vision, the prophetic word will try us. We have to hold onto it. We have to believe God for it in spite of the way it looks. Because the dream is from God, it will come to pass—if you maintain your integrity, walk in righteousness, demonstrate character, do not forsake the dream and do not give up on your destiny and your future. It will come to pass even though it may seem as if it's delayed.

For more information on You Shall Recover All, visit . {eoa}

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