**Digging Deeper Joseph Week 3**

We begin our journey with Joseph today on a 75 mile trek from Dothan to Egypt. He was sold by his brothers into slavery and this was not an easy journey. A 75 mile journey through the desert of the middle east was not an easy journey and this would be even worse if you were a slave.

Genesis 39:1 Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there.

Imagine what Joseph might have experienced and felt after being sold by his brothers on this journey and record your thoughts below.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

We are going to be camping out in Genesis 39-41 today. We have a lot of Scripture to cover but our story is anything but boring. We find the key for the entire story of Joseph in the first five words of Genesis 39:2 The Lord was with Joseph.

Reread those five words. Let them really sink in and let them become the lens through which you read the rest of Joseph’s story. We will see that the presence of the Lord with Joseph will mean EVERYTHING for Joseph.

Look at what the ESV Study Bible notes say about this verse, “Right at the outset, God’s presence with Joseph is unambiguously affirmed. Although God never speaks directly to him (as he did to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), Joseph’s life in Egypt is governed by God’s providential care.”

The ESV Study Bible notes point out three important things for us to understand. The first is that God’s presence was clearly with Joseph. This is paramount not only to Joseph’s story but to our story as well. As followers of Jesus, we have the gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. That means that God’s presence is always with us. There is nothing that we are going through or facing that we are facing alone. God’s Holy Spirit is our constant companion. What does it mean to you that you have His Holy Spirit and are never alone? If you are feeling lonely or feel like you are facing something alone, ask the Lord to help you experience His presence through the Holy Spirit.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

The second point the ESV study Bible notes make is that God never speaks directly to Joseph like He did the other patriarchs. Let’s take a brief bunny trail to see how the Lord spoke to the patriarchs.

Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.”

God told Abram to go from where he was living to where God wanted him to go and Abram loaded up Sarai, his wife, and his entire family and followed the Lord. I can’t imagine it was easy for Abram to move his family but he was willing to do it and I’m sure hearing the voice of the Lord made it easier.

God appeared to Isaac and spoke to him.

Genesis 26:2-3 And the Lord appeared to him (Isaac) and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. **3**Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.

Once again we see the Lord appear and speak to one of the patriarchs. Isaac responded by doing what the Lord asked of him much the same that his father Abraham did.

We saw in the first second lesson that God spoke to Jacob, the son of Isaac.

Genesis 35:9-10 God appearedto Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. **10**And God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.” So he called his name Israel.

While God spoke to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He did not speak to Joseph. How do you think this would have made things harder on Joseph?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

The ESV Study Bible notes point out that God’s presence was with Joseph, God never spoke to Joseph and that Joseph’s life was governed by God’s providence. In the teaching we looked at two definitions of providence and we are going to look more closely at those now.

Merriam Webster’s dictionary defines providence as “God conceived as the power sustaining and guiding human destiny.” God’s providence requires His power and His guidance. God has the power to do whatever He wishes and His plans will prevail. In addition, God’s providence provides us with His guidance.

Where have you seen or experienced God’s power sustaining and guidance in your life?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

The Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary adds, “In His providence God attends not only to apparently momentous events and people but also that seem both mundane and trivial. Indeed, so all-encompassing is God’s attention to events within creation that NOTHING HAPPENS BY CHANCE.

What does it mean to you that God attends to the mundane and trivial things in our lives? Does that change how you approach mundane tasks?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

It is so comforting for me to know that God Is so attentive to everything that happens that nothing happens by chance. It makes me think of what my friend, Lori, calls God moments – those times when you look around at your circumstances or an interaction that you had with someone and you just KNOW that God was involved. Recall a time when this happened to you. Did you recognize it right away that it was God’s providence or was it after the fact? Did you give God thanks and the glory for His involvement?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

God is involved in all area of our lives at all times – even when we don’t see it or feel it. His involvement is not dependent upon what we see or feel. Our perspective is limited and our feelings are fickle. We have to know and trust that He is involved. What are you dealing with right now where you need His power sustaining and guiding you? Write a prayer asking the Lord for what you need.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

One of the things that makes the difficulties we face bearable is the presence of the Lord. It also helps to know that He is involved in guiding us through our circumstances. In addition it is helpful to know that whatever challenges we face or difficulties we are dealing with the Lord will use them for His glory. We may not see that in the moment, but oftentimes hindsight shows us how the Lord used a situation to bring about good.

Romans 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Does that change the way you view your current circumstances or relationships? Can you share a time when you went through something difficult and you saw how the Lord used it for good? Write a prayer of thanks for His providence in your life.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Knowing God was with Joseph and understanding God’s providence and the fact that God had a plan to use even slavery in Egypt for good is important for us to keep in mind as we continue with the story of Joseph. These things undergird everything we will be reading going forward.

Genesis 39:2 The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master.

Why was Joseph successful in Egypt?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Genesis 39:3-4 His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. **4**So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.

We know that Potiphar was an Egyptian and the captain of the guard for Pharaoh. It would mean that he would believe in pagan gods and yet he recognized the hand of God on Joseph. Isn’t it interesting that someone who did not know God or worship Him could recognize His work in the life of someone else?

Do you think that others in your circle who do not know the Lord recognize His hand on you and your life?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Genesis 39:5 So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.

In the midst of his slavery, Joseph found favor. There are times when we are in less than ideal situations – situations where we would be very unlikely to find favor and yet we do. How have you found favor in a situation like that and did you recognize God working in the situation? Write a prayer of thanks for the Lord’s involvement in you having favor. I ask you often to write prayers of thanks to the Lord and it is because we often don’t recognize His hand at the time and often don’t take the time to give Him the thanks and praise He deserves. Don’t skip this part, take the time to thank Him.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Genesis 39:6 From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had, in house and field.

Joseph wasn’t the only one to benefit from the Lord’s presence in his life – all of Potiphar’s house benefited. Have others benefited because of the presence of the Lord in your life?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Genesis 39:6-10 So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. **7**And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, “Lie with me.” **8**But he refused and said to his master's wife, “Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. **9**He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” **10**And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.

We know that Joseph was 17 years old when he was taken as a slave to Egypt. We don’t know how long he was in Potiphar’s house nor how long he was in prison. We will see later in Scripture that he spent a total of 13 years between Potiphar’s house and prison but we now that his faith was established very clearly in the 17 years he was with his family. He was a mere teenager when he went to live in a land of pagan gods and idolatry and yet he doesn’t fall prey to the temptation of Potiphar’s wife not only because he doesn’t want to disrespect Potiphar who has put him in charge of so much but because he doesn’t want to sin against God. That is pretty impressive.

I don’t know what your faith background is, I didn’t come to know the Lord until I was 29 so not sinning against Him didn’t play much of a role in my life in my teen years. I do not quite a few believers who grew up in the church and following the Lord and yet when they became teenagers and went away to college or got out on their own, they took a detour in their faith and lived the life they wanted and not necessarily the life the Lord wanted for them. It makes me wonder what kind of faith must have been instilled in Joseph and realize how much his faith impacted his decisions.

What about you, what was your faith like as a teenager? Was there at time in your life when you lived it for yourself and not what the Lord would have wanted for you? Have you ever confessed that time to the Lord and sought His forgiveness? If not, please write a prayer of lament confessing that season in your life and ask the Lord to forgive you and redeem and use that time for His glory.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

We see next that Potiphar’s wife doesn’t want to take no for an answer and she doesn’t handle Joseph’s reaction very well.

Genesis 39:11-20 But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, **12**she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house. **13**And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, **14**she called to the men of her household and said to them, “See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. **15**And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house.” **16**Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, **17**and she told him the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. **18**But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house.” As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, “This is the way your servant treated me,” his anger was kindled. **20**And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison.

Once again we see Joseph suffer at the hands of someone scheming against him. First his brothers and now his master’s wife. He was in a very unjust situation. Because of Potiphar’s wife’s lie, Joseph was thrown into prison. What do you think that must have been like for Joseph? Have you ever suffered because of a lie someone else told about you? Have you forgiven that person? If not, please ask the Lord to soften your heart towards him/her so that you can forgive them and not allow bitterness and resentment to take root in your heart.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Genesis 39:21 But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

I love this verse so much! Not only was the Lord with Joseph, but he showed him his steadfast love and gave him favor – even in prison! Regardless of where you find yourself today – KNOW, don’t just think but KNOW – KNOW THAT YOU KNOW that the Lord is with you and He is showing you His steadfast love. Keep your eyes open to see where He is showing you favor in the midst of your circumstances – even if it feels like you are ‘in prison’. In the teaching video I asked if there was someone you know that might need to hear that message of hope -that God is with them, that He shows his steadfast love and even give favor. If the Lord brought someone to mind, did you share that with them and if so, how did it go? If you haven’t shared that with them, please do so today – don’t wait. If you didn’t get the name of a person, please pray now and see if the Lord has someone in mind for you to share hope and encouragement with today and follow through.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Genesis 39:22-23 And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. 23The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the Lord was with him. And whatever he did, the Lord made it succeed.

Once again we see that Joseph is put into a position of authority and it was BECAUSE the keeper of the prison recognized that the Lord was with him. Once again we see that even those who did not know the Lord recognized that the Lord was with Joseph.

J. Vernon McGee in his commentary “Through the Bible Genesis through Deuteronomy” says this: “The circumstances did not get him down. He lived on top of his circumstances. I have a preacher friend who tells me my problem is that the circumstances are all on top of me! I think many of us lie that way. But Joseph was one who was living on top of his circumstances. The Lord was with him. He recognized the hand of God in his life, and so he was not discouraged. Discouragement is one of the finest weapons Satan has – discouragement and disappointment.”

What circumstances living on top of you and weighing you down? How are you falling prey to the enemies temptation to discourage you and have you focused on disappointments?Ask the Lord to help you live on top of your circumstances. Ask the Lord to encourage you in the area of your discouragement. Seek the Lord’s help to not focus on disappointments. Is there someone you know who might need to hear this message – if so share it with them. Help them to live on top of their circumstances and not be discouraged or focused on their disappointments.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

While in prison, Joseph is put in charge of at least two other prisoners, the chief cupbearer and chief baker to Pharaoh and they share dreams with Jacob that he interprets for them.

Genesis 40:9-19 So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph and said to him, “In my dream there was a vine before me, **10**and on the vine there were three branches. As soon as it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and the clusters ripened into grapes. **11**Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand.” **12**Then Joseph said to him, “This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days. **13**In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office, and you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly, when you were his cupbearer. **14**Only remember me, when it is well with you, and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house. **15**For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit.” 16When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, “I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head, **17**and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head.” **18**And Joseph answered and said, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days. **19**In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat the flesh from you.”

What boldness it must have taken for Joseph to not only interpret the dreams but to be willing to share not only the positive interpretation but also the negative one. We know the Lord was with Him and the Lord gave him this wisdom. It is hard to speak words of truth when they aren’t easy to hear. How willing are you to speak difficult words to others? Do you have people that you allow to speak hard truths to you? How do you generally respond when it happens?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Everything Joseph said would happen did indeed happen. The chief baker was hung and the chief cupbearer was restored to serving Pharaoh.

Genesis 40:23 Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

The chief cupbearer did not help Joseph out – he forgot. Has that ever happened to you, have you had someone tell you they would help you out but when the time came, they didn’t? Or have you committed to help someone but when it came time to help you didn’t end up helping?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Genesis 41:1 After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile,

We just took a two year jump in the story so we know that Joseph was in prison for two years between the time that he interpreted the dreams for the cupbearer and the chief baker and when Pharaoh had his dreams. The cupbearer remembers Joseph and tells Pharaoh about him and how Joseph was able to interpret both his dream and the dream of the chief baker.

Genesis 41:8, 14 So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh. 14Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh.

Genesis 41:15-16 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” **16**Joseph answered Pharaoh, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.”

Joseph is very clear that he is not the one to interpret the dream, God is. Joseph knows that his ability to interpret dreams comes from God. He is giving God the glory. How do you give God the glory for the things He does through you? Or do you?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

I can remember leading part of a Quiet Day and as part of my teaching I had everyone actually spend some time in quiet praying to see what the Lord had to share with them. I spent time in quiet too and the Scripture the Lord gave to me was Psalm 115:1.

Psalm 115:1 Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!

The Lord gave me this verse before I spoke at my first women’s retreat overseas and it has stuck with me ever since. It is a verse that I personalize when I pray it – Not to me, O Lord, not to me… If you struggle to give glory to God, maybe this is a verse you can use to remind yourself to do so.

Genesis 41:25-28Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. **26**The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. **27**The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. **28**It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do.

Joseph repeated in v. 28 what he said in vs. 25 – that the Lord was telling Pharaoh what He was about to do – making it clear that the Lord was sovereign even over Pharaoh. Whenever we see things repeated in Scripture we need to pay special attention; it is repeated for a reason.

Genesis 41:29-32 There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, **30**but after them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume the land, **31**and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. **32**And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about.

So, Pharaoh was being told that there would be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine and not just any famine but a very severe famine. The doubling of Pharaoh’s dream – the fact that Pharaoh had two dreams meant that the thing is fixed by God – it is determined and when God determines something, He will bring it to pass. Remember Joseph’s dreams – how many did he have? two – don’t you just wonder if this was an ah-ha moment for Joseph as he realizes that his dreams were fixed as well. Not only was it fixed but that it would be brought about shortly. What impact do you think this might have had on Joseph?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

What does it mean to you that the Lord will bring to fruition what He began in you? What has He begun that you are waiting for Him to bring to fruition?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

I am praying the verse below over all of us this week. Please join me.

1 Thessalonians 1:11-12 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, **12**so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.