

Disappointment and Discouragement

Joseph's First Disappointment

*(Genesis 37:3-18 NKJV) "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. {4} But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, **they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.** {5} Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and **they hated him even more.***

*{6} So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: {7} "There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf." {8} And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So **they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.** {9} Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." {10} So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" {11} **And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind."***

What are the two reasons Joseph's brothers hated him?

What caused them to hate him even more? Why do you think they envied him?

Your dreams will breed jealousy, envy and even hatred in others. **Hatred is an emotion that destroys a person's ability to think clearly and behave righteously.** Joseph's brothers were driven into such destruction by this powerful emotion. Their hatred, jealousy and envy demonstrate to us that people will mock us and even hurt us for the things God has put in our hearts.

*"{12} Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. {13} And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." ... So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan. {18} Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, **they conspired against him to kill him."***

We could question Joseph's sensitivity, wisdom and timing in speaking these dreams to his family! He was a boy of about seventeen with much to learn. Joseph spoke innocently, without malice or pride. Even so, he found himself betrayed by his brothers. They conspired against him to kill him. Instead, he was sold into slavery and his hopes and dreams seem destined for destruction. Imagine the fear, the sorrow, the hopelessness and the sense of loss he felt!

If God is in it, dream big dreams!

Joseph's story teaches us that disappointment is inevitable. We will be disappointed with (1) people, (2) with ourselves, and (3) with circumstances that will seem to dash our hopes and dreams.

POINT 1. Disappointment is inevitable.

It is part of everyone's life.

(Genesis 39:1-5 NKJV) "Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. {2} The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. {3} And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. {4} So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority. {5} So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field."

"The LORD was with Joseph."

Joseph now finds himself a slave in the house of the Pharaoh's Captain of the Guard. The Scriptures tell us that even in slavery, *"the LORD was with Joseph."* We must always remind ourselves that God is with us in everything, whether it is good or bad!

Joseph's Second Disappointment

(Genesis 39:7-20 NKJV) "And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." {8} But he refused... {10} So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her. {11} But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, {12} that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside... {16} So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. {17} Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; {18} so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside. {19} So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him... that his anger was aroused. {20} Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison."

Temptation will seldom leave you alone.

God's presence does not guarantee we will avoid injustices or hard times. However, His presence does guarantee that we can be overcomers and see our dreams come true! Because God was with Joseph, he had this potential. His circumstances could not cancel, alter or void it! As long as God is with us, and God is for us, our dreams can still come true. His Word continually promises He will be with us forever, everywhere and in every thing.

(Genesis 39:21-23 NKJV) "But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. {22} And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. {23} The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper."

What caused favor to come to Joseph in both Potifar's house and in the prison? The answer:

"But the LORD was with Joseph."

(Romans 8:31, 35a NKJV) "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?... {35a} Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Paraphrase: Verse 35a:

"Who is able to move you from the place of omnipotent power?"

Smith Wigglesworth

We know that God is with all of us in all things. We often quote [Romans 8:31-35](#), yet some of us never gain release from the things that have captured and discouraged us. Joseph not only endured his persecution and enslavement in all the things he went through, but he prospered in them! He had favor in spite of, and beyond his position!

There are always two options:

Option 1: Misery

Disappointment can be an open gate to bitterness, self-pity, compromise, unforgiveness and worse... all based on what you have experienced.

Option 2: Joyful Expectation for Victory

Disappointment can be the catalyst for our resolve to press on, hope for the future, and have an expectation of the best God has to offer - all wrapped up in the joy of the Lord. This is the attitude of a winner like Joseph: *"I am an overcomer. I am going to take hold of God until my miracle takes hold of me!"*

Joseph maintained his faith and allowed his troubles to strengthen his determination. He repeatedly made a decision that would be vital to his future - a decision to imitate God's commitment to him. Joseph's decision: He would be as much with the LORD as the LORD was with him!

The LORD was with Joseph and Joseph was with the LORD!

POINT 2. Though disappointment is inevitable, misery is optional!

It was an attitude of commitment and trust in God that gave Joseph the edge he needed to conquer his discouragement and overcome his circumstances! And so Joseph was with the LORD in all the disappointments he faced.

Joseph's Third Disappointment

(Genesis 40:1-5 NKJV) "It came to pass after these things that the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. {2} And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. {3} So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined. {4} And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while. {5} Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, had a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night and each man's dream with its own interpretation."

He may be in Prison, but the Prison is not in Him!

Joseph finds himself unjustly put into prison. He may be in prison, but the prison is not in him! Once again he is given favor, authority and position. He has the trust of the keeper of the prison and the captain of the prison guard. There he meets the chief baker and butler of the Pharaoh, who are jailed because they have fallen into disfavor. They are given into Joseph's care and he is kind to them. Each has a dream he does not understand. Joseph is able to explain their dreams to them. He tells them that their dreams predict the baker will be executed while the chief butler will be freed and restored to his former position. Joseph asks a favor of the chief butler in return for all the kindness he had shown him and for the explanation of the dream.

(Genesis 40:14 NKJV) “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.”

(Genesis 40:23 NKJV) “Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.”

The Scriptures tell us the outcome. In his newfound freedom, the chief butler forgets Joseph’s request. Once again, someone has let Joseph down when it really mattered. He was faced with a fresh disappointment. He stays in prison for another two years. It has been thirteen years since his brothers threw him in the pit and sold him into slavery... but suddenly, without any indication that the situation would ever change, something miraculous happens!

God is a “Suddenly God.”

(Genesis 41:1 NKJV) “Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream...”

(Genesis 41:9-14 NKJV) “Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: “I remember my faults this day”... {10} “When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker, {11} we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. {12} Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream. {13} And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him. {14} Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.”

Pharaoh asks Joseph to interpret his dream. Notice Joseph’s reply. It shows us that Joseph continued to maintain his closeness and devotion the LORD! He continued to appreciate and give thanks to God, in spite of all he has endured!

(Genesis 41:15-16 NKJV) “And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it.” {16} So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.””

Joseph correctly explained the dream for Pharaoh. He tells the Pharaoh of seven good years in the land, followed by seven years of famine. The Pharaoh was satisfied with Joseph’s service to him. Joseph, however, was not through. He has had a lifestyle of

pressing through this disappointments and being all he can be in the midst of them. Now, Joseph's habits of excellence and his excellent spirit cannot be held back. He goes beyond simply interpreting the dream, and advises Pharaoh about how to handle the coming famine which the dream has revealed. His final piece of wisdom to Pharaoh is found in Verse 33.

(Genesis 41:33 NKJV) "Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. {34} Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. {35} And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. {36} Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not perish during the famine."

From the Pit to the Palace - Suddenly

(Genesis 41:37-43 NKJV) "So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. {38} And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?" {39} Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. {40} You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you." {41} And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." {42} Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. {43} And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him over all the land of Egypt."

Joseph stuck to his beliefs and did the right thing. (And God was faithful!)

It's always a question of what you do with your disappointments. Joseph persevered. He stuck to his belief that God was with him through everything he endured. He did the right thing, even when the wrong thing was done to him. He never turned from God. God was with Joseph and Joseph was with God.

Many would say Joseph didn't have much to hang onto. He had something alright! God may use an earthquake, or fire from heaven or a still, small voice... or God may use a butler. God is

"Perseverance is an attitude... It's a choice, It's a voice, your voice. Declare a thing!"

Dr. Tom Peters,
Senior Pastor,
Trinity Church
International, Lake
Worth, Florida

faithful. He will relieve you of your burden and release you to your destiny! Always remember this: Every disappointment we face is a great opportunity for our next appointment - an appointment with God, an appointment with our destinies!

POINT 3. Disappointment is an opportunity for your next appointment - an appointment with God!

Here is what you do when it seems like life is just pits and prisons.

1. **“Believe God.**
2. **Behave accordingly.**
3. **Trust Him for the outcomes.¹**

God has your destiny in His hands. Remember, God is with you and if you are consistently with Him... what could successfully be against you and could separate you from Him? Answer: Nothing! Life and its circumstances may disappoint you, but God will not! Stand tall. Stand on His Word. Do the right thing. God is still at work! He has begun a good thing in you and He will bring it to pass.

Things can change suddenly. God is a suddenly God! He will take you out of the pit, past the prison and into the palace!

*“Don’t spend your life focused on history.
Focus on your destiny.”²*

People of Destiny - Champions for God

1. **People of destiny focus on what they do. People without a destiny focus on what they are going through.**
2. **People of destiny are willing to do things they hate... to create things they love.**
3. **People of destiny pursue completion... but not necessarily perfection.**
4. **Everyone stumbles... but people of destiny get back up.**
 - **People of destiny refuse to accept defeat as long as God is in the battle.**
 - **People of destiny refuse to set their own timetables. They let God play out the plan.**
 - **In times of weakness, people of destiny pull themselves up in His strength.**



*Devil
stomping
man of
destiny*

¹ Stowell, Joseph, Shepherding the Church, Moody Press, Chicago, © 1994, P.136. Also, Dr. Charles Stanly - “In Touch” TV program

² Bishop Tony Miller

- In times of personal famine, people of destiny feast on His Word and drink of His faithfulness.
 - In times of sorrow, people of destiny turn to His presence and rest in His arms.
5. People of destiny know they don't decide their futures. They decide their habits and their habits decide their futures.
 - People of destiny are well able to look at themselves objectively. They willingly see their flaws and quickly make adjustments.
 - People of destiny are habit forming people. They are habitual in the Christ-like testimony of their lives.
 6. People of destiny position themselves for blessings.
 - God does not send the blessings to you. He sends your blessings to where you are supposed to be.
 - People of destiny seek the voice of God... so they will know the will of God... so they can find the blessings of God.
 7. People of destiny defend their ground.
 - Unless Satan is on the attack, we are not functioning as champions for God. Satan is not interested in toppling losers. They are already at the bottom. He wants to knock us off the high ground we occupy in Christ.
 - People of destiny stand when it's easy to run. They stand when it's easy to surrender. They stand when it's easy to fall. Having done all to stand, they stand!
 8. People of destiny watch their mouths. They speak life and not death.
 - They are careful of what they reveal and who they reveal it to.
 - People of destiny never discuss their problems with someone who is not capable of solving them. They submit themselves to people who can cover them spiritually and provide wise answers to serious questions.
 - People of destiny speak great things for God. They can only do so because they are wise enough to position themselves to hear great things from God... and they are bold enough to speak great things for God.
 9. People of destiny refuse to just "be." They are "becomers."
 - They engage themselves in the process of becoming all that God has designed them to become. They understand the value of learning and changing. They are teachable.
 - They are disciples first and disciple-makers second.
 10. People of destiny seek out and fulfill their call from the Lord.
 - They are called to be God's champions.
 - They are called to walk in the favor of God all the way to their destinies.

If you were arrested for being a champion for the Lord, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Make this your confession:

“I’m just living in the F.O.G. - the Favor of God. It’s the cloud of glory. Favor is God’s grip on me. Faith is my grip on God. I will persevere until I have the victory. There is a release of favor coming.”³

A Winner keeps moving with the cloud until the glory takes him to the promise.

It has been said that a quitter never wins and a winner never quits.⁴ A winner keeps moving with the cloud, until the glory takes him to the promise. It’s a clear and bright path God has for us.

(Proverbs 4:18, 26 NKJV) “But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. {26} Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established.”

Disappointment is inevitable, but disappointment is always a great opportunity for our next appointment - an appointment with God, which is an appointment with our destinies! Remember, things can change suddenly. He is a suddenly God! He will take you out of the pit and past the prison. He has a palace waiting for you! Be faithful and fulfill your destiny. Stay in the favor of God. Let His light shine upon you and then let your light shine upon others, so that all may see the Jesus in you.

(Matthew 5:14-16 NKJV) “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. {15} Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. {16} Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

When trouble comes, remember to stay in the F.O.G. (The Favor of God). Turn on your fog-lights and chase away the darkness. Light the path you walk with the presence of Christ, the Living Word. He is forever faithful. Let your brightness be a reflection of Him at work forever, in you.

POINT 4. When trouble comes, remember to stay in the F.O.G. (The Favor of God).

³ Prophet Duane White

⁴ Unknown source