

20:20 Vision Ministries -- Devotions by Roger Browning

Week 15 (April 7-13, 2013)

Joseph is one of several Old Testament characters who picture the coming Messiah. We will discover some similarities as we study his life for the next two weeks.

Sunday -- April 7 (Genesis 37:1-11)

Joseph is the first son by Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel. He is introduced in today's text as a tattletale (v. 2). His brothers know that he is their father's favorite even before Jacob makes the colorful robe for him (v. 3). Their hatred for Joseph increases to the point of not speaking "a kind word to him" (v. 4). The rest of this text tells of two dreams that Joseph has that place him in power over his father's entire household (v. 5-9). As a result, his brothers' anger and jealousy reach a new level (v. 8, 11). Jacob, however, keeps the matter in mind even though he rebukes his son with two sharp questions (v. 10-11). As we will see in the story of Joseph, God uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect will. This fact assures you and me that He can use **US** as well!

Monday -- April 8 (Genesis 37:12-36)

Joseph obeys his father Israel (Jacob) and goes out to check on his brothers (v. 12-17). Seeing their chance for revenge, they devise a plan to kill him and deceive their father before those dreams can be fulfilled (v. 18-20). Reuben sees an opportunity to get back on Israel's good side following the horrible sin he had committed against his father's concubine (35:22), so he devises a plan. After removing the special robe they despise, they throw Joseph into an empty cistern (v. 23-24). They follow Judah's advice and sell Joseph for 20 shekels of silver to some Ishmaelites who are heading to Egypt (25-28). Reuben's strategy has failed. Now, they devise a cruel plan to deceive their father (v. 29-32). Jacob identifies the robe and mourns his favorite son's death (v. 33-36). God's plan for Joseph is just beginning (v. 36)!

Tuesday -- April 9 (Genesis 39:1-12)

Joseph is purchased to be the slave of Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials (v. 1). He could choose to be bitter after being betrayed by his brothers; instead, he performs his duties efficiently because the Lord is with him (v. 2). Are you able to give your best for your Master, no matter where He sends you? Potiphar promotes Joseph and puts him in charge of his entire household (v. 3-6). As is often the case, in the midst of success, temptation comes his way (v. 6-7). He rejects the offer from Potiphar's wife and confesses that an immoral act would not only violate his master's trust, but also would be a sin against God (v. 8-10). After rejecting many of her advances (v. 10), he comes into the house to attend to his duties, but none of the other servants are inside. She seizes her opportunity and makes another pass at him. Joseph escapes her grasp and rushes out of the house, leaving his cloak behind (v. 11-12). We will conclude the story tomorrow.

Wednesday -- April 10 (Genesis 39:13-23)

In order to get revenge for his rejection of her, Potiphar's wife tries to frame Joseph using a fabricated story (v. 13-18). Her husband believes her account and sends Joseph to prison (v. 19-20). Where is God while all this is happening? He is on His throne directing the lives of His chosen people! Even though Joseph has been promoted to be the head of Potiphar's household, he is **still a slave**. God has a better place for him. When he is unjustly thrown into prison, The Lord goes with him there also (v. 21). Joseph is promoted to a position of leadership in the prison. The warden does not have a care in the world with God's man in charge (v. 22-23). This sets Joseph up for the next miracle from his Heavenly Father.

Thursday -- April 11 (Genesis 40:1-23)

God's sovereign plan continues to unfold in today's text. Two of Pharaoh's officials are thrown into prison and placed under the supervision of Joseph (v. 1-4). Each of these new prisoners has a distressing dream on the same night (v. 5-6). Joseph notices their worried faces and offers to interpret their troublesome dreams by the power of God (v. 6-8). The Lord's chosen representative listens to the dream of the cupbearer and gives him good news (v. 9-13). Encouraged by that good report, the chief baker reveals his dream (v. 16-18), but his interpretation is not so pleasant (v. 19). Everything comes to pass just as Joseph has predicted (v. 20-22), except that the cupbearer forgets Joseph's request (v. 14-15). God's sovereign timing is always perfect. He is **not yet** ready for His messenger to be released from prison (v. 23). I pray that you have learned to patiently wait on His timing (see Isaiah 40:31)!

Friday -- April 12 (Genesis 41:1-16)

Two years pass as Joseph remains in prison while the ungrateful cupbearer enjoys his restored position of prestige (v. 1). God sends two dreams to Pharaoh in which He forewarns of an upcoming famine (v. 1-7). Pharaoh uses all his secular advisers to find the meaning, but, as usual, they are worthless (v. 8). Finally, the cupbearer has an "aha" moment and tells his master about Joseph and his ability to interpret dreams (v.9-13). **Now** God's timing is perfect! Joseph is brought before Pharaoh who puts confidence in this young Hebrew's ability to help him (v. 14-15). Don't miss the fact that Joseph gives all the glory to God for the gift he has received (v. 16). We have yet to learn what this same Lord will do through **US** when we determine that He, alone, gets the credit!

Saturday -- April 13 (Genesis 41:17-40)

Joseph listens intently as Pharaoh tells his dreams about the cows and the grain (v. 17-24). The Lord's messenger interprets the dream (v. 28-31) before teaching Pharaoh about God's sovereign unchangeable will (v. 32). Then, he suggests a plan of action for the Egyptian leader (v. 33-37). The plan will include the installation of the first income tax (v. 34). How I wish our nation would learn from this and install a flat tax that would be the same for everyone, rich or poor! Joseph's wise plan calls for a 20% tax (v. 34). Pharaoh agrees and promotes Joseph from the prison to the palace (v. 39-41). WOW! God's plan is **awesome** for His chosen people! We will continue Joseph's story in next week's devotions.