

Joseph's Promotion of 'Self'

Gen. 37:1-36; 39:1-41:40

Introduction:

Joseph's story is the story of an arrogant lad who struggled with himself, his family and God and overcame to experience great victory, blessing and impact.

Joseph's victory in his personal life became a source of blessing for the nation Israel and ultimately to all of us. His promotion to Prime Minister of Egypt was the plan of God for the survival of the Messianic line.

Joseph is an example of God's making of a man of God. Taking Joseph as an arrogant young man, he trained and purified him through great adversity, molding him into a believer who understood and utilized the grace of God.

Promoting Himself - Gen. 37:1-11

Vs 2-4 - Polygamous Family

- Joseph was the product of a polygamous family - 3 wives with children from each wife.
- Violation of God's design of monogamy always results in dysfunction in the family unit - especially hard on the children - adultery. [David]
- Polygamy that results in children can force them into rivalry - Joseph tattled on his brothers; brothers hated him.
- Favoritism is parental failure - Jacob was his mother's favorite while Esau was his father's favorite - Jacob became like his parents
- Jacob's poor parenting created an unhealthy environment for his children - Joseph was arrogant; brothers filled with hatred; sold him and lived a long-term lie with their father.
- The family environment was so unhealthy that God had to remove Joseph in order to mold him into the hero he became.

Vs 5-11 - Prophetic Dreams

- Dreams - Old Testament communication from God, often predicting future events - Pharaoh. Num 12:6; 1Kings 3:5
- Dreams in the church age point us inward to struggles in the soul.
- Joseph is a believer by 17 yrs old and receiving the Word of God.
- God reveals to Joseph his mission and ultimate destiny - rule his family.
- God reveals the future to Joseph to prepare him for what was to come in his life - so he would not lose hope in the pit, Potiphar, prison.
- Joseph would not fully understand what God had shown him until the plan came to full fruition.

Vs 5-11 - Promoting Self

- God intends His Word to be used to edify others, not to harm others.
- God intends His Word to unify us not divide us.
- Joseph used his knowledge to pretend he was superior to his brothers - his father had given him the idea by his favoritism.
- Joseph's attitude toward others fostered hatred and jealousy where he could have been and eventually would be an edifying force.
- Joseph's promotion of self is an indication of his spiritual status and how far he has to go before he is ready to fulfill his destiny.

Our Self Promotion

- Man was created with an intrinsic worth - +R from the hand of God.
- Man lost his worth in the fall - Rom 3:10-12 - all became worthless.
- God in grace imputes His own +R in Christ - reestablish our worth - Rom 3:21-22; 2Cor 5:21
- Those who reject God's plan, seek to establish their own +R and worth - Rom 10:1-3.
- Religion seeks to establish +R based on man's works - Gal 5:4.
- Man seeks to establish a sense of worth by comparison - 2Cor 10:12.
- Religion uses the word of God to judge and compare with others, creating worth by comparison.

(1 Peter 5:6) Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He might promote you at the proper time.

- We are not promoted until God promotes us.
- Humility is the door to promotion
- Joseph's promoting of self necessitated the pit, Potiphar and prison.
- The adversities of his life produced the humility necessary for God to promote him and use him in a mighty way.