



Viewfield Baptist Church

To enable people to become fully devoted
followers of Jesus Christ

Joseph Study Leaflet

Sunday 19 May 2019

Sermon 10

“When God calls, he equips”

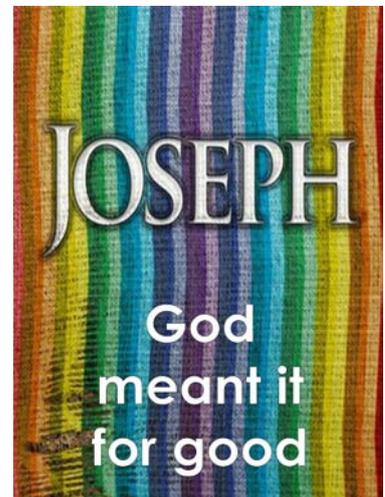
Genesis 41

This study guide will be used in our Small Groups, but can also be used by individuals.

You can download or listen to a recording of the sermon at this link:

<http://www.viewfield.org.uk/media/podcasts>

Leaflets about our small groups are available on the tearbar. If you would like to join a small group, please speak to our Pastor, Rae, or to Pete Hutchison.



Viewfield Baptist Church

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“When God calls, he equips” Genesis 41v37-57

As we continue to reflect on the story of Joseph we had reached the point when he had just interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams saying that Egypt will soon face seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. *Gen 41v25-32.*

We are told in verses 33-36 that Joseph also shared with Pharaoh a plan of how to cope with the situation. We are told that Pharaoh responds by saying: *“Our country needs you.” “Egypt needs you.” Gen 41v39-41.* Joseph is promoted. The Hebrew slave was now Prime Minister. God in his providence had ordered circumstances that this happened.

The Bible says in **Proverbs 16v9**: *“In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.”* This was certainly true in the life of Joseph. The Lord was ordering his steps. What man meant for evil, God meant for good. Be encouraged, God is determining your steps. God had also been preparing Joseph in these trials so that he was ready for this role. I wonder in your life what is God calling you to do? Ultimately, as Christians we are all called to be more Christ like in our character and conduct. However, as Christians God also calls us to particular ministries/work at particular times. **READ Ephesians 2v10. What is God calling you to do?** When God calls, God equips. He prepares us for the work/ministry that he has for us to do.

So let’s consider Joseph and this promotion and to reflect on what we can learn.

1/ You’re the man v38-45

Pharaoh said to Joseph you are the man for the job. **READ GEN 41v39-41.**

What an amazing turnaround. Joseph was in jail in the morning and by evening he is sitting beside Pharaoh as his second-in-command over all Egypt which, was the world’s super power of that day. So Pharaoh had chosen him. It is interesting to notice how the king acknowledges that “the Spirit of God” rests on Joseph. **READ verse 38.**

However, ultimately, it was God who chose Joseph for this role. God’s hand was at work in this situation. The fact that Pharaoh accepted the interpretation as true and made the leap to decide Joseph was the man to do the job is testimony to the supernatural power of God at work. Joseph is now to perform the functions of the king himself, and everyone has to do what Joseph tells them. As he goes around people are to bow before him out of respect for his office. He had once dreamed that his brothers and Father would bow before him, but now all Egypt will bow the knee before him.

He is given an Egyptian wife and even a new Egyptian name. *v45.* The new name is Zaphenath-Panaeah. This name is believed to mean: *“God has spoken and he lives.”* Although his name was speaking about the Pagan sun Goddess Neeath, Joseph knew whose God had spoken and lives. The one whose name is I am. Truly he is the living God and truly he speaks. Joseph had power, authority and was well connected. This was a great opportunity but also a great temptation. The question is: How will Joseph

do when he is rich and famous? Will the one who has been faithful in adversity be knocked out of the race by fame, influence and wealth?

Joseph was the man chosen. You're the man.

2/ The Man with the plan v33-37, 46-57

We are told that after hearing Joseph's idea as to how to deal with the dilemma to face the nation of Egypt, Pharaoh thought that the plan seemed good. He saw Joseph as the man with the plan. Joseph had outlined the plan in verses 33-36. Basically the plan was to store up grain during the seven years of abundance and to hold it in reserve for the seven years of famine. Pharaoh testifies to the fact that Joseph is a wise and discerning person. He also testifies to the fact that God had made this known to him. This wisdom has come from God. **READ v39**

We are told in the Bible how precious wisdom is. **READ Prov 3v13-15**. We are told in the Bible that we should seek wisdom: **READ James 1v5**. As Christians we must desire and seek God and his wisdom.

We are told in verse 46 that Joseph was 30 years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh, of Egypt. He had arrived in Egypt when he was 17. He had waited a long time for life to get a bit easier, yet he doesn't sit back and enjoy his new privileged life. He works hard and serves God in the courts of Pharaoh with the same devotion as he served God in slavery and in prison. He was someone who knew the importance of endeavour and preparation. These are very clear Biblical principles. **READ Proverbs 6v6-8**

We are told how Joseph implemented his plan. During the seven years of abundance, confident of the dream's interpretation, Joseph swings into action and stores up vast quantities of grain **v47-49**. After seven years the easier part of Joseph's job is at an end; then, as famine begins, he has to ensure a fair and adequate distribution of grain both to his own people and to refugees from other countries. **(v53-57)** He was the man with the plan.

3/ What a man?

God had been preparing him. But as we have seen, God has been training him all along for this administrative task. During the difficult times God has been moulding and shaping Joseph's character. His faith has been strengthened.

Joseph is ready and what a man. He was wise and discerning, he was humble and he had integrity. What a man. No wonder he is named in the hall of faith. He trusted in God. Neither the author of Genesis (Moses) or even Joseph himself would want us to reflect on "What a Man" but rather they want us to reflect upon "What a God". As we consider the fact that v57 describes that Joseph is a blessing to the nations we see a partial fulfilment of the promise to Abraham *"through you all the families of the earth*

will be blessed.” However, this points forward to the one in whom it will find its complete fulfilment. JESUS CHRIST. Any good leader should point to God and his grace.

We have seen that there are many parallels between Joseph and the Lord Jesus. Joseph was sold for 20 pieces of silver, our Lord was sold for 30. Now at age 30, he begins his life work, as the Lord did at the same age. God took Joseph from the pit to the palace, and our Lord was raised from the cross, and the grave to his throne of glory. Joseph here at the end of chapter was a blessing to nations, we know that our Lord from his heavenly throne, dispenses blessings to the world. People come to Jesus from all over the world and he gives them the blessings of salvation. Just as all were commanded to bow the knee before Joseph, so are all commanded to bow the knee before the name that is above every name. Joseph was identified as the Saviour of the world, we know that Christ is Saviour. It's all about Jesus.

Bible study questions

Icebreaker: “Who has been the spiritual hero of your life?”

1. Discuss the phrase “When God calls, he equips”.
2. Describe a time in your life when God clearly called you to a particular work.
3. How was Joseph called to his role and in what ways did God equip him?
4. We are told in Galatians 5 of the importance of walking in step with the Spirit. On a practical level why is this so important and what difference does it make to our life and ministry? Discuss.
5. Joseph grew in wisdom and maturity. Reflect on 1 Kings chapter 3 and 4 and the story of King Solomon. Why is it so important to seek wisdom? What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom?
6. In Genesis 41 it is made clear that Joseph works hard. The Bible makes it clear that we are saved to serve. In these days at Viewfield Baptist as God grows his church, what role(s) are you playing or can you play in the work of the body of Christ?
7. We see many parallels between Joseph and the Lord Jesus. Discuss these.
8. Why is it so important that all we do is for the glory and fame of Jesus? How can we seek to make sure this is the case?

Application: “Reflect upon the developing vision at Viewfield Baptist and how you can be involved”