



Viewfield Baptist Church, Dunfermline

Sermon 3- Sunday 10th March
"God has a plan" Genesis 37

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Have your dreams ever been shattered? This is how Joseph must have felt. His dreams were shattered and his world was turned upside down. One minute he is sharing two dreams about his amazing God-given purpose. The next minute he is left for dead and then sold into slavery. Discouraged, confused, perplexed, doubting. Although this was the end of one chapter, it was not the end of the story. God was working out his providential will.

Joseph grew up in a feuding family. There was a lot of pain and hurt. Things didn't get any easier for Joseph when his mother died or when his brothers began to treat him with hostility and resentment. Yet out of all this turmoil, God would fulfil his plans for this feuding family, for Joseph in particular, for the nation of Israel and for the world.

Later in life, despite the early chapters, the family feuding and all the other chapters he would go through, he would testify that God was providentially working out his good and perfect will. **Genesis 50 v19-20.** God is sovereign. God was working out his providential will.

Let's consider how God's hand was at work, even in these circumstances.

1. The Word of Revelation

God had great plans for Joseph. The truth is that God has great plans for all of our lives. **“For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord. Plans to give you a future and a hope” Jeremiah 29v11**

God wants to reveal his will to us. There are many different ways that he reveals his will to us. However, primarily today God speaks through his word. (Although there are many other ways as well).

God want us to receive his revelation with humility. God gave these amazing dreams to Joseph. Although the Biblical account doesn't directly attribute pride to Joseph in the sharing of these dreams, there is an inference of this, in how he shared them and the reactions of his brothers.

Joseph's dreams were shattered, His whole world was flipped on its head. One minute he was sharing the dreams about God's grand purpose for his life. The next moment he was left for dead by his own brothers in a pit. Yet God was still in control.

2. The Work of Preparation

God had great things planned for Joseph. God would have to work in him before he could work more effectively through him. God had given him the word of revelation but he would also have to do the work of preparation.

Let's consider a few points about the work of preparation:

- It came unexpectedly, **Isaiah 55v9**
- God dealt with his pride, **Genesis 37v23**
- God exposed the sin of others, **Psalms 118v8**
- God brought him to the point of no return, **Genesis 37v4**

He would continue to mould and shape him throughout his life so that he was prepared and equipped for his calling. If it wasn't for the pit he wouldn't have made it to the palace. If it wasn't for the prison he wouldn't have been prepared for Prime Minister. So we see the WORD OF REVELATION and the WORK OF PREPARATION. But all the time God was directing his steps.

Study Questions Ice breaker- Describe an occasion when you got lost on a journey?

1/ Describe an occasion when your dreams have been shattered?

2/ Have you ever felt abandoned by God? What did this experience feel like?

3/ In what ways was Joseph's family feuding? What caused all this hostility and resentment?

4/ The Bible says that God's ways are higher than our ways, **Isaiah 55v9.** We are also told that God has plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us a future and a hope. **Jeremiah 29v11.** In what ways is this a comfort to you in your life?

5/ What are some of the means by which God reveals his will to us? List some verses from Scripture that describe God's guidance.

6/ Sometimes we have to wait on the Lord's Word to be fulfilled. Is it hard to wait on the Lord's timing?

7/ Joseph was betrayed by his brothers. Why did they throw him in the pit? How do you think he felt in that pit? How do you think he felt when he was sold as a slave? How do you think he viewed the future? Have you ever been betrayed? How did it feel?

8/ God would prepare Joseph for the calling he would fulfil? What do we learn about God's work of preparation in Joseph's life from Genesis 37?

9/ Why is the work of preparation so important?

10/ God is the potter and we are the clay? Discuss this analogy.

This week: Spend some time listening to what God might be saying.