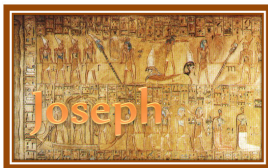




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Who was that Hero in the Multi-Colored Coat? (Part II)

Genesis 45:5: (NASB) *Now, do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.*

Several weeks ago we began to tell the story of a hero - not the kind of hero that rises up in courage to do a deed that changes the outcome of an event - rather the kind of hero who lives his vision for a lifetime and changes the world as a result of his lifetime dedication. This hero is the Joseph of the Old Testament - dreamer, interpreter of dreams, man of wisdom, faith, integrity and mercy. Joseph was a true hero, the kind that appears only once in many generations. What can we learn from him?

(Please refer to Part I in our archived programs at ChristianQuestions.com for a review of the first three Chapters in our story.)

Chapter 4 - Joseph Sent to Prison, A Hero's Lesson in Single-Minded Focus

The Hero's Choice: Be swallowed in despair by misfortune or never flinch from single-minded focus! The fourth lesson in living heroically: The hero does good things for others and is forgotten. Again to the outsider it would seem as though God had all but left him. But, this is precisely how a lifetime hero is developed. Tested, tried and often alone, he shows his motivation by making the choice to live with sacred honor and a single-minded focus!

Joseph interpreted the cupbearers dream: Genesis 40:14-15: Notice the attitude of his request - *do me a kindness.* Genesis 40:23: Joseph didn't whine that he was forgotten and that no one appreciated him.

Joseph continued to make the choice to live differently than everyone around him. We can rise up like this every day. When someone is unkind to us and instead of becoming angry we bless them instead, that is heroic because it is hard to do.

Chapter 5 - Joseph in Prison from Forgotten to Formidable, A Hero's Lesson in Patient Preparation

Pharaoh's dream: Genesis 41:1: He was stuck in prison another two years! Are we willing to wait in such unenviable circumstances? What would we be doing while waiting? Joseph lived a life of great integrity. Habakkuk 2:1-3

Back to the dreams: Genesis 41:2-8: Jesus waited until he came of age to begin his work. Long before Jesus was 30, he knew what he had to do and prepared for that work.

To wait is *not* to be idle; it is to prepare! Luke 2:49-52 **The value of integrity when no one is looking:** Genesis 41:9-16

So the cupbearer recounts the dreams in prison...¹²*A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each according to his dream.*¹³*As he interpreted to us, so it turned out; I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged.*¹⁴*Then Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was hurriedly brought out of the dungeon. When he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh.*¹⁵*And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you could interpret it.*¹⁶*Joseph answered Pharaoh, It is not I; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.*

The Hero's Choice: Sulk in the state of being forgotten or sharpen your skills in the non-public time granted! The fifth lesson in living heroically: When opportunity seems to present itself and fade, the true lifetime hero does not see the loss; rather he sees the gold in pursuing continued discipline and preparation. He interpreted dreams and then years went by before he would be called on again. But during those intervening years he lived to the same standard of dedication regardless of his circumstances.

So, how boldly do we proceed when opportunity finally does present itself?



Chapter 6 - Joseph Elevated to the Right Hand of Pharaoh, A Hero's Lesson in Rising to the Occasion

Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream: Genesis 41:25-40: Joseph knows what God has revealed and has no fear in speaking it while giving credit to God Almighty, even though Pharaoh is heralded as god on earth! **Joseph even gave Pharaoh advice:** Genesis 41:33-36: Joseph not only gives interpretation from God, he also gives sound and clear advice from God as to how to make use of the window of opportunity to prepare for famine. This serves as an additional verification of the genuineness of the interpretation.

Joseph becomes governor, Joseph (1995 movie)

- *It would call for a man of exceptional talent. Potiphar perhaps. The answer is obvious. There could be no better man for this job than this man himself! Could we find anyone endowed with the Spirit of God as he is?*

Joseph was ready because he "did the work" in the quiet times in prison, while being persecuted and while being left for dead. Genesis 41:37-40

Joseph becomes governor, Joseph (1995 movie)

- *Now hear the word of Pharaoh, Rah on earth, God as man. You shall be my chancellor. And all my people shall respect your orders. Only this throne shall set me above you. I make you the governor of all of Egypt. I set you over my house, my people, my entire kingdom without your consent no man shall lift a hand or foot in all of Egypt.*

Genesis 41:41-49

The Hero's Choice: Kowtow to the powers that be or proclaim the reality that needs facing with force! The sixth lesson in living heroically: The hero's full confidence in his mission can bring full cooperation of all.

Chapter 7 - Joseph Prepares to Save the World and His Family, A Hero's Lesson in Using Power with Integrity

True Hero, www.YouTube.com

- *A hero to me is someone who is always there for you and someone you can really trust.*
- *I believe that heroes are the people that do what needs to be done when it needs to be done regardless of the consequence.*
- *A hero to me is a selfless person who puts their life on the line for people that they love or for someone they don't even know.*
- *I like to think of a hero as someone you can look up to, who sets a good example for those around you.*

Genesis 41:50-57: This is such a lesson for us to patiently wait for the blessings of God **while standing for the truths of God**. This time period is when Joseph was between 31 and 37 years old; 14 to 20 years after being sold as a slave. He now has enormous responsibility.

Here we see integrity shining through. It is not enough to hear of the plan, one must speak it boldly and act on it with such zeal that those who look at us can plainly see the conduit of God's will. Because Joseph was so God-honoring in his approach, he had no lack of confidence. He not only alleviated a physical famine but also a potential spiritual and emotional famine in the land. He prepared for the people so well that they had no worries.

John 6:68-69 Genesis 42:1-17 (NASB) ¹Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, why are you staring at one another? ²He said, Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy some for us from that place, so that we may live and not die. ³Then ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy grain from Egypt...⁵So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, for the famine was in the land of Canaan also.

Need presents opportunity...

⁶Now Joseph was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with their faces to the ground...



⁸But Joseph had recognized his brothers, although they did not recognize him. ⁹Joseph remembered the dreams, which he had about them, and said to them, you are spies; you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land. ¹⁰Then they said to him, No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. ¹¹We are all sons of one man; we are honest men, your servants are not spies...Your servants are twelve brothers in all, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no longer alive. ¹⁵by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶Send one of you that he may get your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies. ¹⁷So he put them all together in prison for three days.

 **10 brothers in prison, Joseph (1995 movie)**

- Stop it! Stop it! Arguing won't get us out of here.
- Then what will?
- Not what, but who!
- God! Is this His final punishment for what we did?
- Imagine how Joseph must have felt when we threw him down the well!
- We have each other. You left him alone!
- We, WE threw him in the well. All of us!
- There's no point dwelling on that. For twenty years you've argued the same thing, but what's done is done. One thing has nothing to do with another.
- Are you sure, brother? (Continued yelling and arguing)

The guilt they carried becomes evident. They said these things in front of Joseph, not realizing that he understood everything they said. Joseph used an interpreter so that it looked like he did not speak their language!

Genesis 42:23-25: Joseph tested them to see if they were in fact sincere and had integrity.

(Source: Biblical commentary by Matthew Henry) The imprisonment of Simeon, Genesis 42:24. He chose him for the hostage probably because he remembered him to have been his most bitter enemy, or because he observed him now to be least humbled and concerned; he bound him before their eyes to affect them all.

Joseph had been tested over 20+ years of hardship. Here was the opportunity to see if his brothers had also learned from their experience over those same 20+ years. Similarly, Jesus is testing us to make sure that we have learned from our experiences and are sincere and with integrity.

They were instructed to bring Benjamin back to Egypt to achieve the release of Simeon - a dilemma for sure! Genesis 42:35-38: As the grain is depleted, Jacob finally agrees because the famine continued.

The Hero's Choice: Be overcome with revenge for wrongs done or test to see if integrity has grown in the place of jealousy in the hearts of those who did the wrong! The seventh lesson in living heroically: Integrity requires the use of power with Godly responsibility. Integrity requires passion - but a passion for godliness and mercy and NOT for what we may feel.

We should be inspired to change ourselves. Has integrity grown in my heart in place of the wrongs I have done? Joseph lived that life of change, one day at a time through all circumstances. Once he was given responsibility, he still acted in the same way. He did not change because the circumstances changed; the circumstances changed to match his abilities. He was given that leadership because God prepared him and he accepted that preparation.

The power and integrity of Jesus was tested and he in turn tested the integrity of his followers: Luke 4:5-8 Mark 8:31-34



Chapter 8 - Joseph Teaches, Forgives and Provides, A Hero's Lesson in Completing the Mission

So, the brothers go back to Egypt bearing gifts and double the money for payment. Joseph receives them and continues to test them. They show honesty and humility when brought to Joseph's house. Joseph again sets them up and again a brother - this time Judah - offers himself instead of Benjamin.

Joseph is the forgiver and preserver of life: Genesis 45:1-15

The family was the subject of the promise of God, so he could not minimize the situation. Joseph was not bitter for what they had done to him years earlier. Joseph understood that his real reason for being there was to preserve his family. He had compassion for their suffering. When someone treats you poorly, do you ever consider that it is actually a blessing from God to improve your Christian character?

The Hero's Choice: Be tentative in applying that which you have accomplished to others or pour out the gifts you have secured with unbridled goodness and mercy! The eighth lesson in living heroically: Having stayed the course through all manner of trial and uncertainty, freely bestow upon others the freedom and privilege that your efforts have bought for them. That is what a hero does.

Compare to Jesus in John 3:16-17: (NASB) *¹⁶For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him.*

What a great and inspiring story of a hero who lived his heroic integrity to God his whole life, no matter what the outside circumstances were!

***So, who was that hero in the multi-colored coat?
For Jonathan and Rick (and Kathy!) and Christian Questions,
Think about it...!***