



## Life Group Study Notes

### "Dreamworks"

Ps. Rice Broocks - September 17, 2017

#### Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What subject was hard for you when you were young in school?
- What did you want to do with your life when you were young?
- Where did you live when you were 17? Did you like it?

#### Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at [www.bethelworld.org](http://www.bethelworld.org)

Genesis 37, 39, 40 tell the story of Joseph's difficult journey of many great trials.

Joseph was the youngest, favored son of a blended family, but his brothers hated him. God revealed to him in a pair of dreams that his brothers and parents would one day be under his leadership. Joseph unwisely told his brothers about it in a way that provoked them, and his brothers hated him all the more, so much so that they wanted to kill him. Instead, they ended up selling him to slave traders who in turn sold him as a slave to an Egyptian official, Potiphar. As a slave he had Potiphar's favor, but his master's wife hated him because he refused her sexual advances. She falsely accused him, resulting in his being thrown in prison. In prison, he also had favor with the jailer. Joseph significantly helped a fellow prisoner, who had been a high ranking official, but had fallen out of favor with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. This man was released from prison and elevated to serve the king again. But this official who owed Joseph a huge debt and could have likely procured his release instead forgot him, and Joseph remained in jail for two more years. In the end, God delivered Joseph and fulfilled the dreams he had given him, but it was a long, difficult journey of 13 years filled with suffering and disappointment from the time Joseph first received his dreams from God until the time they were fulfilled. Yet God was with him for the entire journey.

This story of Joseph is deeply insightful and instructive for our lives today.

It describes the dysfunction so prevalent in all of us due to sin. Joseph's family is in many ways emblematic of the dysfunction of all families. Joseph himself was foolish, aggravating his brothers unnecessarily, bringing all kinds of trouble into his life.

God had a purpose for Joseph's life and revealed a glimpse of it to him in the form of symbolic dreams. God's plan already factored in the sinfulness of Joseph's brothers,

the foolishness of Joseph, and the variegated sinfulness and injustices of all that Joseph would experience at the hands of other people.

This reveals the divine maxim that what happens to us cannot thwart God's purpose and plan for us being fulfilled. Instead, it is our choices over time that will determine whether or not God will bring to pass all he has determined for us. If we will turn to Jesus, who died for our sins, then even our sins can be redeemed.

The Lord was with Joseph in spite of his own complicity in provoking his brothers to the point that they sold him into slavery. God granted Joseph success in each successive stage of his life. He prospered in Potiphar's house and in the prison. His circumstances were, of course, not to his desire. Who would want to be either a slave or a prisoner? Yet God was with him, for Joseph desired to honor God in his life. It is important to have heaven's perspective when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

Joseph never gave in to either bitterness or immorality in spite of the major temptations he faced. These sins have taken many down and robbed them of their divine inheritance. Esau was sadly such a man, the opposite of Joseph in many ways.

Hebrews 12:15-16 ESV *See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.*

By God's grace Joseph journeyed through 13 years of trials and tribulations, hardships and injustices (37:2; 41:46). God will prove to be just as faithful to us in our journeys, if we will continue to trust him. May God keep us from becoming bitter when we go through our trials. He will, if we will keep seeking him.

### **Discussion (10-15 minutes)**

**Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.**

- How have you handled the disappointments or injustices you've experienced in life?
- How did Jesus handle the disappointments and injustices in his life?
- What should we do with the anger and frustration we feel as we go through life?

### **Prayer (10-15 minutes)**

**Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.**

- Thank God that he is ultimately in control of your life and its outcome.
- Ask God to fix as an anchor in your soul the hope that he will fulfill his purpose and plan for you.
- Ask God for his grace through Jesus Christ to respond well to all the trials and tribulations of this life.