

TRIALS AND TRIUMPH OF JOSEPH

Text: Genesis 39:9

INTRO: Joseph has been referred to as the most Christ-like man of the Old Testament. There were several great O.T. characters: David, the man after God's own heart; Abraham, the friend of God; Moses, the meekest man who ever lived, etc. But with all their greatness & all the respect that is due them, Joseph still seems to me to be the most balanced & Christ-like man of them all. Consider with me for a few minutes the trials and triumphs of Joseph.

I. THE TRIAL OF FAMILY CONFLICT.

- A. Joseph was born into a family of conflict. 2 wives, 2 female servants. Rachel was barren & envious of the other 3 who bore Jacob's children. Finally, Joseph was born of Rachel, Jacob's favorite wife. Gen 29:31 thru 30:24.
- B. Jacob was partial to Joseph, which in turn, became a disadvantage to him in many ways. READ GEN 37:3-4, 18-24
- C. Joseph's own behavior also added to his brothers' hatred.
 - 1. He tattled on some of them for wrongdoing, 37:2
 - 2. He informed them of dreams in which he ruled over them, even over his parents. His relating these dreams may have been an attempt on his part to impress his brothers & gain their respect. If so, it failed miserably. Whatever his reasons, it added to his brothers' hatred and animosity toward him, 37:6-11.
- D. But Joseph overcame all this conflict. When he was in a position to retaliate against his brothers, instead, he forgave them & treated them in a loving manner, 45:4-8.

II. THE TRIAL OF SENSUAL TEMPTATION, 39:6b-12.

- A. He was young and handsome.
- B. In addition to the sexual temptation, Potiphar's wife might have been in a position to have increased Joseph's freedom & responsibility even more.
- C. It is in this incident that Joseph puts into words the attitude

that kept him faithfully resisting temptation, faithfully serving God in the face of all adversity, vs. 9.

III. THE TRIAL OF ADVERSITY.

- A. Sold into slavery by his own brothers at age 17.
- B. Falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, wrongly imprisoned.
- C. Forgotten for 2 years by the butler who should have been forever grateful to him, 40:14-15, 23
- D. All this time, separated from his father & all his family in a foreign land.

IV. THE TRIAL OF PROSPERITY.

- A. After Joseph interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh, he was promoted to great power, prominence & prosperity. He was still only 30 years old. **READ GEN 41:39-44**
- B. Prosperity, probably more than any other one thing, has turned many folks away from God. It led to the downfall of Israel, according to the prophet Amos. It is responsible for much of the coldness & indifference in churches today.
- C. Prosperity & power open the door to many temptations the poor & common man may never experience. But Joseph is proof that this too may be overcome if we can develop & maintain the attitude of Joseph: "How can I do this great wickedness & sin against God?"

CONCLUSION: Joseph faced many trials. He was often down, but never out. Over family conflicts, over personal temptation, over adverse circumstances, Joseph was the victor. He even triumphed over the temptations & tests that come with being put in prosperous, powerful positions of prominence. What Joseph did any young man or young lady, any middle aged man or woman, any elderly man or woman, can do if we can bring ourselves to embrace his prime concern: "How can I do this great wickedness & sin against God?"

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