

DON'T STOP DREAMING

Joseph is someone in the bible known as a dreamer. He is 17 years old when we first read about him in the bible. He lives with his Father & his 11 brothers and works for the family business. The bible tells us that he is the favourite son of his Father Jacob and receives love and special treatment. It causes his brothers to hate him for this. One day Joseph gets a dream from God. Below we read about this and the response his brothers have toward Joseph

Read

Genesis 37:3-11

This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father's flocks. He worked for his half brothers, the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing. Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe. But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn't say a kind word to him.

One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. "Listen to this dream," he said. "We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!" His brothers responded, "So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them. Soon Joseph had another dream, and again he told his brothers about it. "Listen, I have had another dream," he said. "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!"

This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father scolded him. "What kind of dream is that?" he asked. "Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?" But while his brothers were jealous of Joseph, his father wondered what the dreams meant.

Discussion

1. Have you ever had a dream from God or heard God speak to you?
2. How does God speak to you?
3. Have you told someone a dream or something you were believing for - only for them to misunderstand you or think it's dumb?
4. Why do you think it's important to have a dream for your life?

- *How does this apply to my life?*
- *What am going to do this week?*

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Start with a recap of week one

In this week's reading, Joseph's life changes dramatically. Being favoured by his Father and then being so confident in his dreams from God cause his brothers to really get jealous. They get so jealous that they take action.

In the passage below we see how his brother respond to hearing Joseph's dream.

Read

Genesis 37:18-28

When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, they made plans to kill him. "Here comes the dreamer!" they said. "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!" But when Reuben heard of their scheme, he came to Joseph's rescue. "Let's not kill him," he said. "Why should we shed any blood? Let's just throw him into this empty cistern here in the wilderness. Then he'll die without our laying a hand on him." Reuben was secretly planning to rescue Joseph and return him to his father.

So when Joseph arrived, his brothers ripped off the beautiful robe he was wearing. Then they grabbed him and threw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it. Then, just as they were sitting down to eat, they looked up and saw a caravan of camels in the distance coming toward them. It was a group of Ishmaelite traders taking a load of gum, balm, and aromatic resin from Gilead down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother? We'd have to cover up the crime. Instead of hurting him, let's sell him to those Ishmaelite traders. After all, he is our brother—our own flesh and blood!" And his brothers agreed. So when the Ishmaelites, who were Midianite traders, came by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him to them for twenty pieces of silver. And the traders took him to Egypt.

Discussion

1. Reading this weeks passage, how do you think Joseph's brothers felt about Joseph's dream?
2. What effect do you think jealousy can have on us?
3. Why do you think we get jealous of others?
4. Unlike Joseph's dad, the bible tells us that God does not show favoritism but loves everyone equally. Knowing this, how do think it should change our thinking when it comes to things like jealousy?
5. What are some of the things you are thankful for that God has done for you?

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Start with a recap of week two

As we read last week, Joseph's life took a dramatic turn. He now finds himself in a foreign country, knowing no-one. In the natural it looks as though his dreams are far from reality. He gets sold to a man called Potiphar and works for him. Despite this situation, Joseph has great success and does really well. Let's read about it below.

Read

Genesis 39:1-6

When Joseph was taken to Egypt by the Ishmaelite traders, he was purchased by Potiphar, an Egyptian officer. Potiphar was captain of the guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. The Lord was with Joseph, so he succeeded in everything he did as he served in the home of his Egyptian master. Potiphar noticed this and realized that the Lord was with Joseph, giving him success in everything he did. This pleased Potiphar, so he soon made Joseph his personal attendant. He put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned.

From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the Lord began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished. So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat!

Discussion

1. What can you guess was Joseph's attitude while he worked at Potiphar's house?

2. Through Joseph's life we can see that God can be trusted, even with the hard stuff. What are some things we can do to help us trust God more?

3. Even when we go through really hard times or are disappointed with how things have turned out, Joseph's life shows us we can still succeed. What do you think Joseph's success came down to?

4. To do so well at his job, Joseph must have had a positive attitude. How do you think he kept such a positive attitude?

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DON'T STOP DREAMING

Start with a recap of week three

Pressure is something we all have to deal with in our life. Joseph is someone who was able to handle a lot of pressure in his life from when he was a teenager. There was a bigger reason he lived and behaved the way he did: he was doing it for God. Often when we face difficult situations or pressures, if we choose to do right, even though no one may acknowledge it, we can be confident that it will work out in the end because God is with us and he will vindicate us (i.e. he rewards those who do good, and will punish those who do wrong). Let's read below how Joseph handles some more pressure in his life.

Read

Genesis 39:6-20

Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded. But Joseph refused. "Look," he told her, "my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God." She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after day, but he refused to sleep with her, and he kept out of her way as much as possible. One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work. She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "Come on, sleep with me!" Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house.

When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled, she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. "My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! He came into my room to rape me, but I screamed. When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me." She kept the cloak with her until her husband came home. Then she told him her story. "That Hebrew slave you've brought into our house tried to come in and fool around with me," she said. "But when I screamed, he ran outside, leaving his cloak with me!" Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her. So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained.

Discussion

1. When reading this passage, what was it that's gave David confidence that he could defeat Goliath?
2. What is it that God has done in your life so far (big or small) that gives you confidence he will come through in future?
3. Saul tried to give David his armor but it didn't fit so he used what he had (his sling and a stone). God can use what's in our hands to do great things. What's in your hands now that God could use?
4. God wants us to take down Giants in our worlds. What are some of the Giants you are believing to take down? E.g. insecurities, peer pressure, fears, addictions

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