

Remnant Life Church

10.16.22

Joseph

Pt 2

Two Dreams

Gen 37:2-11

We began this series last Sunday by stating something very obvious

- Jesus was the greatest who ever walked the earth
 - He was a man, but also God
 - And because of that he led a life free of sin
 - It is His life that we should try and copy in our own every day

But second on my list of lives to copy is Joseph

- There are 12 Josephs in the Bible
- The earthly father of Jesus and the husband of Mary is the prominent one of the NT
- Joseph, the 11th son of Jacob, is prominent in the OT beginning in chapter 37 of Genesis

Jacob is the father of 12 sons ([Gen 35:23-26](#))

- Rueben is the oldest
- Down to Benjamin, the youngest
- Joseph is number 11 in the birth order
- Because it is a hierarchal society, the younger of the boys means the lesser
 - At the time of the beginning of his story Joseph is a boy of 17
 - Joseph is the favorite which causes problems with his 10 brothers
 - And the gift of a long, coat of authority did not help the situation

And so, we are in the midst of a pretty unhealthy family dynamic brought on primarily by a father playing favorites

And just to stir things up even more, Joseph did not help his situation through his lack of tact and wisdom regarding two dreams God gave him

Dreams in the ancient times were considered sent and derived from a divine realm

- IOW it was the gods (small g) speaking to mortals
- Of course, in the Bible, God used dreams many times communicate with His creation
 - Jacob dreamt that he saw a stairway leading to heaven from earth with angels ascending and descending ([Gen 28:12](#))
 - God used a dream to tell Gideon that he would be victorious over the Midianites ([Judges 7:13](#))
 - And God gave Peter a dream that showed him that God's love was for everyone and not just the Jews ([Acts 10:13-15](#))
- But this was not only for those who followed the one true God
- All leaders and men of power in that time relied many times on dreams to gain direction for their actions

- In **Daniel 2** Nebuchadnezzar the king of the Babylonians had a dream that Daniel interpreted for him
- When King Abimelech took Sarah from Abraham because he said she was his sister, God came to him in a dream and warned him not to touch her (**Gen 20:2-4**)
- In **Genesis 41** Pharaoh had dreams that Joseph interpreted
- In **I Kings 3** God appeared to Solomon in a dream telling him he could have anything he wanted – of course, Solomon asked for wisdom
- In **Matthew 1** and **2**, the Lord appeared to Joseph on three separate occasions
 - The first to tell him it was okay to take Mary as his wife (**Matt 1:2**)
 - The second so that he would not go back to Nazareth but go instead to Egypt (**Matt 2:13**)
 - The third to tell him that Herod was dead and it was okay to go home (**Matt 2:19**)
- So, the purpose and function of dreams was very important in the Bible
 - I also believe that they are very important for Christians today
 - The problem is that not many know how to discern the voice of God versus their own voice or the voice of the enemy
 - Not every dream is prophetic
 - I also believe that dreams are many times just the mind being free to roam
 - But what is just as important is understanding what the dreams mean
 - Rarely are they literal and timing is also critical to understanding what they mean
 - But that is all for another time

But one other aspect of dreams is also true – most times they are intended for that person, and that person alone!

- Joseph did not recognize this and poured gasoline on an already smoldering fire
- Remember that his father had just elevated Joseph by giving him the coat
- Now Joseph shares with them 2 dreams that causes the fire to ignite and explode in full burn

READ – Gen 37:2-11

Joseph's dreams were a direct indication of what was going to take place in the future

- In the first dream, his brothers sheaves of grain (which represented the 10 of them) would bow down to Joseph's sheaf
 - Now it did not take an interpreter to determine what this meant
 - And the brothers picked it up immediately
 - Of course, we know that what the dream indicated was exactly what happened
 - Look what it says in **Gen 42:6**
 - *Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the person who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground.*
 - Do you think that there may have been a small part of Joseph that was thinking, "Hmmm, I guess dreams do come true!"
 - Not likely, but could you have blamed him?

- The second dream then goes even further
 - Not only are his brothers bowing down but so are his mother and father
 - This may seem to be out of line since Joseph's mother Rachel died giving birth to him ([Gen 35:17-19](#))
 - There are two possible explanations:
 - In the first dream only his brothers were bowing down to him, suggesting that he would be first among his brothers through the patriarchal blessing of his father. Yet in the second dream his mother and father are both included meaning Joseph would eventually have prominence in the ancestral line and he would supersede even his parents
 - Second, since Rachel died when Joseph was an infant, a child under the age of ten that is orphaned or whose mother had died would be taken in by another woman in the family. In this case it would have been Rachel's handmaid Bilhah who would have raised him as his "mother" along with her birth children, Dan and Naphtali.
 - This means that Bilhah was the person represented as the moon to Jacob's sun in the second dream.

While I think that is interesting it is not the most important aspects of the dreams

The first is the Hand of God preparing the path that Joseph's life would take

- These dreams are what pushed his brothers to take drastic steps to rid themselves of this favored dreamer
 - We will look in more detail at what they did next week
 - But God was fully in control of a situation that appeared to be out of control
 - God was in control when Moses was facing the Red Sea, the mountains on either side, and the Egyptians coming up from behind ([Ex 14](#))
 - He was in full control when Gideon was about to face the entire Midianite army with only 300 men ([Jdgs 7](#))
 - And He was in full control when Jesus was being nailed to the cross ([Matt 27](#))
 - Please know that regardless of the circumstances or situation you find yourself in, God is fully in control.

Second, Joseph was the final piece of a four-man puzzle who God used to shape, develop and define the nation of Israel.

1. Abraham – the patriarchal father of God's people who walked by faith and not by sight
 - Tested like no other man when told he needed to offer his son as a sacrifice ([Gen 22](#))
2. Isaac – a man of integrity and kindness to all even the Philistines as he lived among for a while ([Gen 26](#))
3. Jacob – the ultimate gladiator who wrestled and battled with God and man alike
 - Yet God did not forsake him even though you might call him a hothead

- His name meant “to take hold of” which is why God changed it to Israel which means “he struggles with God”
 - And didn’t that turn out to be the accurate description for the nation of Israel throughout the Scripture?
 - He was a conniver and a schemer ([Gen 27](#))
 - He “took hold of” his brother’s birthright
 - But God took hold of him for the purpose of continuing the development of His people
4. Finally, we have the life of Joseph
- Perhaps the unsung hero of this group
 - After all, God is described in the Scripture as the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?
 - God told Moses to say those words to the people when they asked who told him to lead them out of Egypt in [Ex 3:15](#)
 - And it was what Joseph went through for 13 years that saved his family, all 70 of them, from starvation and preserved the line of God’s people

We do not nor should not live by the dreams we have at night

- Primarily because many things can influence them
- But God does still speak in dreams
- For the person who is willing to listen
- Joseph did not completely handle things the right way at the age of 17 but in every situation he was put in following that, he lived as a man of great wisdom, integrity.

Two things we learn from this:

- First, God does not require perfect people to accomplish His will
 - All you have to do is read through the lives of the great men of both the Old and New Testaments to see the struggles and failing they each had
 - But what God does require is obedience to His leading
- Second, His hand will always prepare the way for where His finger points
 - We will see in the weeks to come that Joseph found himself in some pretty discouraging situations that were not of his doing
 - But God was with Him because Joseph stayed close to God in how he lived his life