

He Spoke Not A Word

Joseph's brother hated him, they threw him into a pit, they sold him into slavery ...

... at the young age of 17 Joseph enters Egypt, the capital of the first world empire in similar fashion to how the Apostle Paul would enter Rome, the capital of the 6th world empire 1700 years later ... in chains.

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there. ² The LORD was with Joseph, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. ³ Now his master saw that the LORD was with him and how the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand. (Gen. 39:1-3)

1. If You Are Ignorant of God's Word You Will Be Disoriented by God's Will

Verse 2 says that Joseph was "**a successful man.**" It also says he had a master...

... so, in God's economy "success" does not preclude slavery.

Verse 3 says "**the LORD was with him.**"

... this phrase is used several times in the story of Joseph which includes accounts of Joseph being betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, falsely accused, and imprisoned.

... while all those bad things were happening to Joseph, the "Lord was with him."

... the Lord's presence in our life does not mean that we will never suffer negative experiences

... Walking with the Lord doesn't mean we will be exempt from the hardships like betrayal, slavery, false accusations, or even imprisonment.

All things work together for the believer's good and God's glory ... that will always be the end of the matter for the child of God.

... but in life's journey on this earth, anything can happen

- Multiple times the Israelites complained and against Moses and threatened to kill him
- David's son Absalom orchestrated a coup, took David's throne, and led an uprising against his father.
- The people of Jerusalem forced Jeremiah to go to Egypt and at one point threw him in a pit
- The 3 Hebrew children ended up in a furnace ... Daniel in a lion's den
- God tells the prophet Hosea to marry Gomer a prostitute and after he does, Gomer leaves him for other men, and later when he is old God tells Hosea to go rescue her and take her back as his wife.
- The Apostle Paul was whipped with 39 lashes five times, beaten with rods 3 times, and stoned

The blessings of God ... the favor of heaven ... the rewards of walking with God ... does not mean you will be exempt from the troubles and hardships of life.

Last Saturday night around 9pm Daniel Yates was in one room of his home getting one daughter ready for bed, in another room his wife Melanie Yates was reading the bible to their youngest daughter who was already in bed ...

... there was a loud BANG outside the home and suddenly a stray bullet flew into the house hitting Melanie in the head and she died instantly.

Melanie and Daniel are passionate Christians.

In her FB bio she says: I'm an introverted human being who loves Jesus first an' foremost.

Her brother wrote after her death: 'Everybody who knew Lanie knows she loved Jesus Christ with every fiber of her being. There is no doubt whatsoever that she is in heaven at this very moment.

You see, in Romans 8:28 Paul wanted us to understand that ALL THINGS (good and bad) that happen in the lives of believers was part of God's will for us.

We struggle with the bad things because all we know is the past and the present...

... we don't have access to the future

... we can't see into eternity

But if God is God, then we should trust Him with everything that happens in our lives ...

If you are ignorant of this reality, you will become disoriented when trouble enters into your life.

Jesus said in John 16:33 - "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world"

Even at the young age of 17 Joseph had learned to trust God with his whole life ... the good and the bad.

... and if you don't get ahold of this truth when trouble comes into your life it's going to cause you to become UNCERTAIN ...

You will get angry, discouraged, depressed, and if you are not careful the devil will tempt you to try and get you to stop living for God ...

You've heard it ... *I was serving God, I was living for the Lord but then this happened and so I just quit ...*

NO!

... You had God on retainer and when he didn't do what you wanted and things didn't go your way and trouble came ... you fired HIM.

... that's what happened.

... Like Demas in 2 Timothy, you traded the way of God for the empty pleasures of the world.

In 2005 I went through an 8-month depression and during that time God showed me this verse.

(Isa 50:10-11) ¹⁰ Who is among you that fears the LORD, That obeys the voice of His servant, That walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. ¹¹ Behold, all you who kindle a fire, Who encircle yourselves with firebrands, Walk in the light of your fire And among the brands you have set ablaze. This you will have from My hand: You will lie down in sorrow.

- Even a person who fears and obeys the Lord can find themselves walking in darkness
- When you do, don't kindle a fire and try to make your own light to dispel the darkness just keep trusting God
- ... because those who try to walk in their own man-made light will only increase their sorrow

Trouble comes into their lives and people turn to drink and drugs ... or some other form of self-medication

... they cheat on their spouse

... they leave their marriage

You need to know that God's will may include some trouble and when that happens, trust God and trust that he will walk with you through that trouble ...

... He will never leave you

... He is a friend ...

... you will never be alone

God's will may include trouble, but it will never include God's abandonment of you.

So, God is with Joseph ... Joseph is successful but then this happens...

⁶ So he left everything he owned in Joseph's charge; and with him there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. ⁷ It came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." ⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. ⁹ "There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" ¹⁰ As she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her or be with her. ¹¹ Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. ¹² She caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside. ¹³ When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, ¹⁴ she called to the men of her household and said to them, "See, he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make sport of us; he came in to me to lie with me, and I screamed. ¹⁵ "When he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled and went outside." (Gen. 39:6-15)

2. God Can Open Doors You've Never Knocked On, But So Can Satan

God's open doors are pathways to blessing ...

Satan's open doors are pathways to destruction ...

Satan walks about a roaring lion seeking to devour you ...

Potiphar is a married man, and his wife was most likely a beautiful woman ...

... certainly, that would be the nature of the temptation.

She was after Joseph ... whenever he came around was **evil in her eyes** and **sin in her heart**.

She saw Joseph and she wanted him ... she chased after him

... and for a while Joseph was able to avoid her

But one day, when all the other servants were gone, she snuck up and grabbed him ...

... but Joseph was able to tear himself away from her, leaving his coat in her hands.

Joseph did exactly what the Apostle Paul would advise 1700 years later ... he “fled youthful lust” he “resisted the devil.”

But how was Joseph able to resist this powerful temptation?

Joseph maintained his integrity because **he had a clear understanding of what sin** is ...

... he didn't say I can't do this because “we might get caught” or “I'm not interested” or “You are not my type” ...

Joseph said I can't do this because it would be “*evil and sin against God.*”

... because of **who God is to Joseph** and who **Joseph is to God** this young man took action and was careful to live a protected life.

He didn't attack her, but he did everything in his power to avoid her

There are three things that will leave one open to sin and moral failure.

- a. Undetected Weakness
- b. Unexpected Opportunity
- c. Unprotected Life

... this was why Moses killed the Egyptian taskmaster

... David sinned with Bathsheba

... Peter denied Jesus

... Ananias and Saphira lied to the Holy Spirit

Joseph understood what sin was and he protected his life but the ultimate source of his integrity came from God.

In Genesis 41 when Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream and advised him **Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" (Gen. 41:38)**

Joseph was blessed with the presence of the Holy Spirit

This is important and we see this from time to time in the Old Testament that the Holy Spirit was only on specific people like ... Joshua, Othniel, Elijah etc...

The presence of the Holy Spirit makes all the difference in the world

... this is exactly why Jesus told his followers *in John 16 that he would ask the Father to send us the Holy Spirit*

... *In Luke 24 Jesus said to the disciples that He would send the promise of the Father, so they needed to stay in the city until they were clothed with power on high.*

Paul writes this to the Ephesian believers:

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:14-19)

Paul says I'm praying that the indwelling Holy Spirit will strengthen you in the inner man

- That you will be rooted and grounded in love
- Be able to comprehend the breadth, length, height, and depth of God's love that goes beyond knowledge
- That you will be filled with the fullness of God

The source of Joseph's faithfulness was his own personal intention AS WELL AS the presence and power of God's Spirit.

As New Testament believers we are unbelievably blessed that we have become the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Now let's look at the last part of this part of the story.

¹⁵ "When he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled and went outside." ¹⁶ So she left his garment beside her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she spoke to him with these words, "The Hebrew slave, whom you brought to us, came in to me to make sport of me; ¹⁸ and as I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled outside." ¹⁹ Now when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, "This is what your slave did to me," his anger burned. ²⁰ So Joseph's master took him and put him into the jail, the place where the king's prisoners were confined; and he was there in the jail. ²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. (Gen. 39:15-21)

Joseph possibly could have given in and done this thing with Pharaoh's wife ...

... but if he had I believe his story would have ended here ... but he didn't.

... and that is the last lesson from today's text.

3. Faith Is Also Measured By What You Could've Done, But Didn't

Without faith it is impossible to please God

... and pleasing God includes doing the things we should and not doing the things we shouldn't do.

... obedience is both positive and negative activity.

By faith Noah built an ark and by faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Throughout his life Joseph is pictured as someone whose trusted God to give him strength and direction.

... and because of his trust God blessed him in unusual ways.

... at the end of his life Jacob was giving his last will and testament from his death bed

... here at life's end Jacob said something about Joseph that was almost cryptic.

²² "Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a spring; Its branches run over a wall. ²³ "The archers bitterly attacked him, and shot at him and harassed him; ²⁴ But his bow remained firm, and his arms were agile, From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel) (Gen. 49:22-24)

He says that Joseph was fruitful in spite of the "*archers who bitterly attacking him.*"

... those bitter attacks to which Jacob referred was the brothers hating him, selling him into slavery, imprisonment and certainly Potiphar's wife.

... and her attack was first to try to try and entice him into immorality ...

... and then when he wouldn't give into her evil desires, she then told lies about Joseph ...

... she made false accusations, destroyed his reputation which caused him to be thrown into prison.

It is not easy thing to be misrepresented and to have your character slandered and believed.

... people who have gone through the darkest of trials and survived ... have been finally broken by lies and character assassination.

But on his deathbed Jacob says that Joseph wasn't broken ...

... (as he puts it) Joseph's "*bow remained firm ... from the hands of the mighty one of Jacob.*"

Jacob's **faith/courage/character/integrity** was his bow ... and it remained firm.

HOW ... because of the HANDS OF GOD ... the Spirit of God was in him.

I want to say something to every follower of Christ....

... You may feel you are at the end of your rope ...

... There may be an inward temptation toward sin inside your heart that may seem to be growing stronger and stronger ...

... You may be suffering the lies of a duplicitous friend

Hear me today: Let evil do what it will and shoot what arrows it will ... **GOD IS ON YOUR SIDE!!!**

Keep your trust in God firm and true

... If God is for you, who can be against you.

... Just as God gave Joseph strength and aid, he will give you strength and aid also!

And notice what happens.

Joseph's focus on God was so good and true, that when Potiphar's wife accused him ...

... he didn't defend himself.

Just because she was his enemy, just because she lied about him ...

... Joseph seems to be showing this evil woman compassion.

I'm sure she was both embarrassed and disgraced by Joseph's rejection, **she was the offender**

... but Joseph covered her disgrace with his silence.

... he could've said "*No she came after me*" ... he could've told it all ... but he didn't.

... Also, the crime that Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of was punishable by death, but Potiphar only sent him to prison.

... that fact may imply that Potiphar knew the character of his wife and suspected she was lying...

... If Joseph had declared his innocence he might have been believed

... but Joseph covered her disgrace with silence ...

... Why, so that she might have the opportunity to repent

His compassion for her soul was greater than his concern for his own well-being.

Does this not remind you of Jesus!

When Jesus was falsely accused before the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman governor Pilate he refused to speak.

The trumped-up witnesses who testified against Jesus contradicted each other and yet Jesus did not refute them.

... during his trials Jesus only answered his questioners when they directly asked him if he is the Christ, the Son of God.

During his trials, Jesus is slandered, spit upon, slapped, mocked, and beaten, and yet he does not defend himself.

Why does Jesus, THE WORD, THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE, HE WHO STILLED THE WIND AND WAVES WITH A SIMPLE PHRASE remain silent?

Jesus' silence was a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that the Messiah would suffer willingly:

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. (Isa. 53:7)

With his silence, Jesus takes away not only our sin and guilt, but also our shame:

Jesus Christ took our sin and all of the punishment that goes with that sin ...

... part of that punishment is shame.

Had Jesus defended himself and protested his innocence, he would have suffered no shame, and that would have left us guilty.

Jesus' willingness to take our shame is the opposite of my own sinful selfish desire to make myself appear better than I am ...

... my pride, my self-justification, my covering up my own shame is the opposite of what Jesus did.

Rowland Hill tells in his "Village Dialogues," about a church where there was morning and afternoon preaching.

In the morning a certain Mr. Tiplash, a very fine intellectual preacher spoke. In one of his flights of oratory, said,

"O Virtue, thou art so fair and lovely, if thou wert to come down upon earth, all men would love thee." with a few more pretty, beautiful things.

Mr. Blunt, an honest preacher in the meeting was asked to preach in the afternoon.

Mr Blunt responded to the first sermon by saying,

"O Virtue, thou didst come on earth, in all thy purity and loveliness; but instead of being beloved and admired, they took thee, and hung thee by thy quivering limbs upon a cross

... while you hung there dying, they hissed at thee, mocked thee, scorned thee.

And when thou didst ask for water, they gave thee vinegar to drink, mingled with gall.

... yea, when thou didst die thou they sealed thy borrowed tomb, with enmity and hatred."

Do you see that just as Joseph covered the shame and embarrassment of Potiphar's wife with his silence ...

... Jesus covered our shame with his silence so that He might redeem us.

His compassion for our soul was greater than His concern for His own well-being.