

Title: **God speaks to us through His Word (How many believe? Let's have tea and coffee then!)**

God speaks to us through His word. But WHEN, HOW, WHERE, WHY and to WHOM?

Working Title: Waiting on God – **NOT YET JOSEPH**

Scripture: **Genesis 37 verses 1-11**

Familiar with story of Joseph? Man of Faith (Hebrews 11.22).

Wise and prudent, Forgiving, had strong emotions, was spiritually sensitive and saw God's hand in human events (Gen 45;7,8)

The story of Joseph in the bible teaches us many things. It shows us among other things that even when we believe and trust in God, we are not guaranteed instant and sustained success and blessing; even when God is with us, life can often be a struggle.

But if we are prepared to wait on God, He will bring us through and ensure His purposes and plan for us are fulfilled, so long as we trust in Him and are obedient to His calling.

JOSEPH'S JOURNEY is quite a ROLLER COASTER

- Favourite son, to hated brother. (Gen 37:8)
- Favoured slave to being falsely accused and thrown into prison. (Gen 39:20)
- Favoured prison guard but left to anguish in jail. (Gen 40:23)
- Favoured and raised up to be PM of Egypt. (Gen 41:40)

Had Joseph now reached his PINNACLE? Had God fulfilled all his plans and purposes in Joseph?

**Star Wars. Episode VI** 'Return of the Jedi' Luke Skywalker visits Yoda to find out about his father Darth Vader. LS says to Yoda, 'I have become a Jedi Knight' – 'NOT YET' says Yoda.

NOT YET Joseph. NOT YET, Joseph.

Every time something good or bad happened to Joseph, **GOD WAS WITH HIM.**

- Chapter 39 verse 3 'and his master saw that the Lord was with him' (Potiphar)
- Chapter 39 verse 21 'the Lord was with him and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper' (Prison)
- Chapter 41 verse 39 'inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as wise and discerning as you' (Pharaoh)

In EVERY SITUATION he faced, God gave Joseph FAVOUR, even though that favour could land Joseph in hot water.

HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE JOSEPH? Knowing that God was with you but the circumstances didn't seem to match that. It's a challenge, isn't it.

**WAITING ON GOD** is never an easy option, but it's the only way.

- Psalm 37:7 'Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him'
- Isaiah 30:18 'For the Lord is a god of justice, how blessed are all those who long (wait) for Him'
- 1 Corinthians 4:5 'Do not go on passing judgement before the time but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts'
- Psalm 130:5 'I wait for the Lord, my soul does wait, and in His word do I hope'

Joseph was a DREAMER, and his dreams came from God. Joseph dreamed of greatness.

He dreamed that one day his BROTHERS WOULD BOW DOWN before him and that he would REIGN over them. He dreamed that his WHOLE FAMILY would bow down before him.

These dreams would come to pass, but perhaps not quite in the way either Joseph or his family imagined.

The things that God has in mind for us may come to pass, but NOT NECESSARILY IN THE WAY we think or imagine

As we read the unfolding story of Joseph we begin to wonder exactly what GOD HAS IN MIND, and HOW LONG it will take for His purpose and plans to be outworked.

Joseph is NOT THE ONLY biblical character who had to wait on Gods timing

Noah (150 years)

(lessons in Life 1-11)

"Everything I need to know about life I learned from Noah's Ark

1. Don't miss the boat
2. Remember we are all in the same boat
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah started to build the Ark
4. Keep fit. When you are really old someone may ask you to do something really big and grand
5. Don't listen to the critics, just get on with the job that needs to be done
6. Build your future on high ground
7. For safety's sake always travel in pairs
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. Ask the snails and the cheetahs
9. When you're stressed, float a while
10. Remember the Ark was built by amateurs. The Titanic was built by shipbuilders
11. No matter the storm, when God is with you, there's always a rainbow to remind you of His promise

ABRAHAM before he received the promised son (25 years)

MOSES (40 years in the wilderness)

DAVID (12 years to be King)

DANIEL, PAUL, RUTH, ESTHER

Let's look at some REASONS why GOD MIGHT WANT US TO WAIT. God rarely works according to our timetable

(Story of Mary & Martha, Jesus & Lazarus) Martha says to Jesus, 'Lord if you had been here **my** brother would not have died' (**John 11; 21**)

1. Waiting reveals our **TRUE MOTIVES** and can bring out either the best or worst in us. We want **SHORT TERM SUCCESS**, sometimes we are just **DOING FOR OURSELVES OR OWN EGO**. (think of Joseph, think of Jesus)
2. Waiting **BUILDS PATIENCE** in our lives. Learning to wait for **SMALL THINGS** helps to have patience for **BIGGER THINGS**.
3. Waiting **BUILDS ANTICIPATION**; the **LONGER** you have to wait, the more you will appreciate. We tend to treasure things we have to wait a long time for
4. Waiting **TRANSFORMS CHARACTER**, rubs the **ROUGH EDGES** off us. Look at Noah, Abraham, Moses, etc. Even Jesus had to wait nearly 30 years until His ministry would begin
5. Waiting **BUILDS INTIMACY** with God. **GETTING TO KNOW GOD** is not just filling our time

Waiting, in whatever circumstances can bring **OPPORTUNITIES** that we never imagined. **MATURITY** does not happen overnight, but over time. It may take months or years of seemingly wasted and unproductive toil.

This was happening to Joseph. His **DREAMS WOULD BECOME REALITY**, but whilst he was waiting, God was building Joseph's **CHARACTER**

**FAITHFULNESS** to God in apparent lean and dark times can **PREPARE AND POSITION** us to be used by God in **MORE INFLUENTIAL WAYS** than we have ever imagined

Look again at the story of Joseph and you see all these things happening

Times of **SOWING** and **REAPING** always involve a **PERIOD OF WAITING** between **OBEDIENCE** to God and **THE HARVEST**.

**Galatians 6:9** 'and let us **NOT GROW WEARY** while doing good, for in **DUE SEASON** we shall reap, if we do not **LOSE HEART**'. The bible shows us that Joseph did **NOT LOSE HEART**.

**JESUS DIDN'T FRITTER AWAY** all the years of waiting. He was a carpenter and He was a King in waiting. God the father prepared His Son whilst he was living and

working in a town people had little desire to go near. He prepared him in **RELATIVE OBSCURITY**

- "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but **MADE HIMSELF OF NO REPUTATION**, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He **HUMBLED** Himself and became **OBEDIENT** to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly **EXALTED** him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" Philippians 2:5-11

### ***God can change you for the better in the worst of times***

He did that with Joseph. Joseph knew God was with him and he **NEVER FORGOT** Him, in the **DARKEST** times and in the times of **FAVOUR**.

You might think that becoming PM of Egypt was the **EPITOME** of his ministry. But it wasn't.

You might think your dreams will **REMAIN UNFULFILLED**. You might think, 'Is this it?'

Joseph's dreams were not about becoming a great leader in Egypt.

Joseph's dreams was about **RULING AND REIGNING OVER HIS FAMILY** and **PRESERVING** the people of Israel (Gen 45:7)

Ultimately, preserving the **LINEAGE OF CHRIST**.

But God took him on a **ROLLER COASTER JOURNEY** to get him there.

That was God's plan for him because the dreams were of God and in **DUE TIME**, He would fulfil them

The story of Joseph points us to Christ. Joseph is a 'type'.

Joseph and Jesus are both objects of **SPECIAL LOVE BY THEIR FATHER**, both are **HATED BY THEIR BROTHERS**, both are conspired against and **SOLD FOR SILVER**. Both are **UNJUSTLY CONDEMNED THOUGH INNOCENT**, and both are **RAISED FROM HUMILIATION TO GLORY BY THE POWER OF GOD**.

God's word speaks to us in **EVERY SITUATION AND CIRCUMSTANCE**. Always **POINTING US TO JESUS**, and what He has accomplished for us.

As you read God's word, **ALLOW IT TO SPEAK TO YOU**. In **DUE TIME** He will answer your prayers and fulfil your dreams. Our response **AS WE WAIT** is to **TRUST AND OBEY** Him.

“TRUST God from the bottom of your heart

Don't try to FIGURE OUT EVERYTHING on your own

Listen for GOD'S VOICE in EVERYTHING YOU DO, EVERYWHERE YOU GO,

He's the one that will KEEP YOU ON TRACK.

**Proverbs 3:5-6 The Message Bible**

Song. 'Never Failing Love' Stuart Townend Track 12 (The Journey)

AMEN