

Genesis 40-41
12-2-18 PM

God had given Joseph dreams of glory; one day all would bow to him. But what had happened instead? First, he was sold as a slave. Subsequently, he was falsely accused and imprisoned. Genesis 40 begins with him as a foreign slave *in prison* perhaps the most deplorable condition a person might be in in the ancient world. However, Genesis 40-41 tells how he used his opportunities in those situation and was raised up to be Prime Minister of Egypt. There are five character traits we might consider in Joseph that contributed to this elevation.

1. Joseph remained faithful in all circumstances

Remember that Joseph was in prison for being righteous. As a foreigner, he had no people of fellowship (think of Paul in prison visited by brethren). Still, in this terrible place, Joseph remained faithful to God. He demonstrated this by serving his new “master” just as well as the old. POINT: No matter the circumstances stay faithful (Revelation 2:10). Even when it appears that there is no benefit to being faithful, be faithful; God is always present and working in your life

2. Joseph did not focus on the past

Joseph had been betrayed by everyone whom he had served; his family, then Potiphar. Yet even then he does not come across as grudge holding against those who hurt him. Instead he focused on what was to come, and had hope for the future. POINT: Don’t focus on the past, but instead look to the future (Philippians 3:13). Don’t get caught up in all the bad things that have happened to you.

3. Joseph made opportunity by helping others

Egyptians were not kind to his people (Gen. 43:32). Yet here in prison he helped two men in need. Add to that his being truthful even when it was bad news. Of course we know that this will bring him to Pharaoh’s attention. Did Joseph know this entirely? POINT: Be ready to help anyone in need (Hebrews 13:2). Helping others even if it does not seem to benefit us can still benefit us.

4. Joseph gave God the glory

Consider here that Joseph never took credit for God’s works. It could have easily been said that Joseph interpreted the dream, but Joseph says he did not. Only God can do so (think about that in your dreams!). POINT: God is the source of all of our abilities (2 Corinthians 3:5). Never believe that your blessings are your own works. Remember Nebuchadnezzar!

5. Joseph made plans to succeed

Even though God had promised this success and used him, it was still up to Joseph to plan to use what God had revealed. Joseph still needed to plan to succeed. We understand that faith without works is dead; so did Joseph! POINT: Prepare for the things that are to come (Luke 14:28-33). Never assume that because God has promised you need not prepare.