



What were the things that made Joseph become from his father's house the second one in Egypt, through all the stages that he went through? What we know for sure is that all things that he went through, God made them work for Joseph's good. God remained faithful to the initial destiny and calling that He gave Joseph, and

Joseph was perseverant in faith in His God throughout all the stages. In that way, he was able to sustain the glory and grandeur of such an influential position that was offered to him in the land of Egypt.

Let's look at the historical context of Joseph's life : some scholars place him as living in the time of the Middle Kingdom of Egypt between 2000 - 1786 BC, under the reign of 8 disinterested pharaohs, and elevated to fame in the land of the first of them, Sesostri III. (~ 1878- 1841 BC) that was king of the 12th dynasty.

The military campaigns of this pharaoh gave birth to an era of peace and economic prosperity, which reduced the power of regional leaders and led to a revival of crafts, trade and urban development. Sesostri III was so influential that he was among the few pharaohs of Egypt who were deified and honored with a cult, even during his own life.

Thus, if we add the fact that Sesostri III conquered Nubia (Ethiopia) by greatly expanding the territory of Egypt and that the period of his reign (19th century BC) was one of the most flourishing in the history of the country of Egypt, we can slowly begin to understand the magnitude of the greatness experienced by Joseph in Egypt.

What were the stages of Joseph's life that he went through until he reached that place of glory ?

From the beginning (when he was 17 years old) God gave Joseph two dreams (Genesis 37

:5-9) that foreshadowed his destiny, his and his family's. But his father and brothers rejected this gift of Joseph (to "see" the future) by calling him "made up" and illusory. Thus, Joseph received the nickname of "dream maker" (Genesis 37 :19)

Out of envy, he was sold by his brothers, then became a slave in the house of Potiphar, the chief of Pharaoh's guards in the land of Egypt, then was wrongfully accused and thrown into prison. In fact, it seemed that his gift would have been the source of all Joseph's misfortunes, because he got lower and lower, first sold, then slave, then prisoner, and so Joseph's dreams and future seemed to be buried forever. But behind the scenes, Joseph's destiny was being woven in those very situations. After years, God would revive the gift of discovering the future in Joseph's life, showing him how powerful and true it is.

How did this happen ? Two rulers of the emperor, the cupbearer and the baker, were thrown into the dungeon where Joseph was also imprisoned. After a while, they each had a dream (we observe here the guidance of God in Joseph's life – Genesis 40 :5) that foretold their future. Not being able to understand what their dream could mean, they told it to Joseph the next day, and he gave them the interpretation at that very moment : after three days the cupbearer was to be restored to office, and the baker was to be sentenced to death. This is exactly what happened, and thus the field was prepared for the dream that would lead to the salvation of the seed of Israel, through the intercession of Joseph.

Next events happened incredible fast: Pharaoh had a dream describing 7 years of abundance followed by another 7 years of famine in the country of Egypt (Genesis 41:1-7), the cupbearer remembered Joseph, Pharaoh called Joseph to the palace and he interpreted the dream for Pharaoh. Joseph was appointed as administrator over all the wealth of the land of Egypt and suddenly the one who had been called a "dream-maker" by his brothers had become a "secret discoverer" (Tafnat-Paeneah – Genesis 41 :45). Thus, his gift handled with wisdom had the power of life and death.

And now we wonder, is there anything we can learn from Joseph's life? Surely, there is!

First of all, we notice that God was faithful towards Joseph and towards the calling over his life, no matter the obstacles that other people tried to put in front of him, and no matter

Joseph's good or not so good decisions at times. Second, we can see how through all the stages he went through, Joseph was faithful to God at his level of knowledge and faith that he had back then, and God used this as the strong foundation on which the great work before Pharaoh rested.

Maybe you find yourself in the story of Joseph, being in "prison" and waiting for something to happen to your life. Maybe you once had a dream, a gift, a calling and maybe you believed in them, but it seems like they didn't get you anywhere. And maybe you lost hope because you don't see anything in the future anymore, you resigned and now you are just waiting...

Yet please let me tell you that time has not stopped for you. The moment of "peace" you go through does not necessarily mean stagnation, as long as you continue to remain in faith in His Word. Although the present stage seems to be a tough one for you, God does not call us to simply endure the present, but overcome it and always come out on top with joy.

Raise your eyes and look at Him, be a good steward of what you think God has entrusted to you in these times, even if you think of it as little! Invest in your relationship with Him and believe in the gift you have been entrusted with. Be aware : this "little" is the very heart of the specific plan and future vision that God has prepared for your life.