

Navigating Tough Times -PURPOSE

God always has a bigger purpose in the trials we face and His work helps us to find and live out our purpose.

IN THE MIDST OF TOUGH TIMES, WE NEED TO...

1. REMEMBER GOD'S PROMISES

GENESIS 37: 1-11 "Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed, the land of Canaan.

² These are the family records of Jacob.

At 17 years of age, Joseph tended sheep with his brothers. The young man was working with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives and he brought a bad report about them to their father.

³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than his other sons because Joseph was a son born to him in his old age, and he made a robe of many colors for him. ⁴ When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not bring themselves to speak peaceably to him.

⁵ Then Joseph had a dream. When he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. ⁶ He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: ⁷ There we were, binding sheaves of grain in the field. Suddenly my sheaf stood up, and your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf.

⁸ "Are you really going to reign over us?" his brothers asked him. "Are you really going to rule us?" So they hated him even more because of his dream and what he had said.

⁹ Then he had another dream and told it to his brothers. "Look," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun, moon, and 11 stars were bowing down to me."

¹⁰ He told his father and brothers, but his father rebuked him. "What kind of dream is this that you have had?" he said. "Are your mother and brothers and I going to come and bow down to the ground before you?" ¹¹ His brothers were jealous of him,¹ but his father kept the matter in mind.

A. God had given Joseph a promise of the present and the future.

B. God has also given us promises of our present and our future.

Ex. Psalm 34:7-8- "The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.

¹⁸ The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

2 Corinthians 4:17- "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."

1 Peter 5:10- “the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.”

Deuteronomy 31:6- Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

2. REDEEM THE TIME WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN

A. Joseph made the best of a less than ideal situation by serving and being faithful to God.

Genesis 39:2-3- The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master ³“When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his master’s sight and became his personal attendant.”

Genesis 39:v. 20-“But while Joseph was there in the prison, ²¹the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. ²²So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. ²³The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph’s care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

B. In tough times, we also have the opportunity to learn and to grow by serving and being faithful to God.

Ephesians 5:16-17- “Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise— ¹⁶making the most of the time, because the days are evil.”

Revelation 2:2-4- To that same church in Ephesus- “I know your works, your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot tolerate evil. You have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and you have found them to be liars. ³You also possess endurance and have tolerated many things because of My name and have not grown weary. ⁴But I have this against you: You have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember then how far you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first.”

C. REFLECT ON GOD’S PROVISION

Genesis 50:20- “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”

- a. Joseph acknowledged God power over the circumstances and His provision.
- b. We need to acknowledge God’s power over our circumstances and His provision in our lives.

Rather than asking God “WHY”, ask God “HOW” can/will He use this for His glory.