

Cherished Bible Stories

Lesson 9



A Story Of Providence (Genesis 37, 39-45, 50)

Introduction

God has always worked among men either in 2 ways...miraculously or providentially. Both indicate His complete control over all things to bring His will to fruition. Neither "method" violates man's free will, and this is especially evident when considering Divine providence.

There may not be a greater Bible story on providence than Joseph (*Esther runs a close 2nd!*) God needed Joseph in Egypt, and how He chose to get him there provides wonderful lessons for us to learn and live.

Read the story and be prepared to answer the following questions.

- 1) What do we learn about Joseph in **37:2-3**? How did this affect his brothers? (**37:4**) Is any of this reminiscent of **25:27-28**?
- 2) What is recorded in **37:5-11**? What bearing does this have on **37:18-20**? Who appeared to be the exception? (**37:21-22**)
- 3) What eventually happened to Joseph because of his brothers? (**37:23-28**) What else did the brothers do? (**37:31-35**)
- 4) How did Joseph fare in Egypt? (**39:1-6a**) What brief description is given in **39:6b**?
- 5) What is recorded in **39:7-8**? How did Joseph respond? (**39:9**) What truth does Joseph admit in his statement to Potiphar's wife?

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- 6) How "persistent" was Potiphar's wife? (39:10-12a) What was Joseph's response? (39:12b; cp. 2 Tim. 2:22) What was her reaction? (39:13-18) What happened as a result? (39:19-23)

- 7) What events occurred while Joseph was in jail? (40:1-19) What request did Joseph make of the cupbearer? (40:14-15) How did that turn out? (40:20-23)

- 8) Who else had a dream? (41:1-8) How did Joseph finally get involved? (41:9-14)

- 9) How did Joseph help Pharaoh? (41:15-36) What did Pharaoh decide as a result? (41:37-45) How successful did Joseph become? (41:46-49)

- 10) *Thought questions:* how might Rom. 8:28 apply? Considering the kind of situations God used in His providence to bring Joseph to Egypt, what do we learn?

- 11) What comes to pass in 42:1-5? What did Joseph do in 42:6-9a? How long has it been since he last saw his brothers?

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- 12) *Thought questions:* would you agree this presented Joseph with an “opportunity?” Given his position, what could he have done? How does **Rom. 12:17-21** apply?

- 13) How did Joseph treat his brothers? **(42:9b-17)** What other decisions did he make? **(42:18-25)** What did the brothers think all during this, especially Reuben?

- 14) What opinions did the brothers form as a result? **(42:26-28)** What resulted when they related all these events to their father? **(42:29-38)**

- 15) What happens when Joseph finally sees Benjamin? **(43:16-30)** How did he continue to treat his brothers? **(43:33-34)**

- 16) What were Joseph’s actions as his brothers prepared to return home? **(44:1-13)** How did Joseph continue the “charade” when they appeared before him again? **(44:14-34)** What did Joseph finally do? **(45:1-4)**

- 17) Describe Joseph’s attitude in **45:5-8** and later in **50:15-21**. When does providence ultimately “make sense?” What is necessary until then?