

## Sabbath School Lesson #11 – Joseph, Master of Dreams – 4-10 June 2022

**C**hrist would have us know that God fulfils His purposes and the efforts of human to thwart His prophetic purposes can never succeed. Let us illustrate. Turn to Genesis 37. You remember how a shepherd boy, the youngest of twelve children, was given a dream by God. In the sincerity of his heart he related this dream to his brothers, and from that time they set themselves against him. One day the father sent the boy with a message to his brethren. “And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams” (verse 19-20). What were these men trying to hinder? – the fulfilment of a dream that God had given to Joseph. But who had the direction of the matter, the brethren of Joseph, or God? As we shall see, God carried the design He had for Joseph, in spite efforts of his own brethren to turn it aside.

**Sunday: Family Troubles** – Let us use Q&A here to see how troubles unfolded. How many sons had Jacob? “Now the sons of Jacob were twelve” (Genesis 35:22). Which one did Jacob love the most? “Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours” (Genesis 37:3). How did Joseph’s brethren regard him? “And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him” (verse 4). What made them hate him still more? “And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying” (Genesis 37:5-11).

**Monday: The Attack on Joseph** – Continuing Q&A. Upon what errand did Jacob send Joseph? “And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem” (Genesis 37:13-14). When his brethren saw him coming, what did they propose to do? “And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams” (verses 18, 20). What did they do with him when he came? “And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it” (verses 23-24). How did they afterwards dispose of him? See verses 25-27. For how much did they sell him? “Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt” (verse 28). How do the wicked ever regard the just? “The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth” (Psalm 37:12). What trait was it that moved Joseph’s brethren to sell him into Egypt? “And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt; but God was with him” (Acts 7:9). What scripture was verified in their case? “For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work” (James 3:16). In what class is envy placed? “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you

before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21). What course did they take to deceive their father? “And they took Joseph’s coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found; know now whether it be thy son’s coat or no” (Genesis 37:31-32).

**Tuesday: Judah and Tamar** – We turn intercepting to Judah’s shame in Genesis 38. What happened in the story? Judah’s sin was revealed. Tamar produced *the ring and the bracelets* in court, which justified the fathering of the child upon Judah (verses 25-26). We learn here that wickedness that has been most secretly committed, and most industriously concealed, yet sometimes is strangely brought to light, to the shame and confusion of those who have said, *No eye sees*. However, there is an investigative judgment going on, where all that is done in secret is laid open. Remember what Judah said to his father, deceiving him about what they did to Joseph? *See, is this thy son’s coat?* (Genesis 37:32). So it was now said to Judah, “See, are these thy signet and bracelets?” Judah, being convicted by his own conscience, confesses his sin: *She has been more righteous than I* (Genesis 38:26).

**Wednesday: Joseph, a Slave in Egypt** – Joseph was sold as a slave, he was put into prison, and finally called forth, and stood next to the king. And the time came when his own brethren came and fell down before him. How did Joseph respond to his brethren? In Genesis 50:18 we read: “And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring it to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.” If God meant this for good to Joseph, why should he punish his brethren? He was able to see God’s providence in it all. God had worked out the fulfilment of his dream, and his heart was so filled with gratitude that he could not cherish hatred against his brethren. “Now therefore fear ye not,” he said, “I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.” If we watch the providence of God, we would often speak kindly not harshly to people. This experience is mentioned in Psalm 105:15 “Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him.”

**Thursday: The Dreams of Pharaoh** – That Joseph’s life in Egypt is type of Christ’s is often overlooked. “*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne*” (Revelation 3:21). These words are addressed by our Lord to His followers after His exaltation from suffering and death. They clearly recognise *two* thrones, the throne of the Father and the throne of Him who “is the beginning of the creation of God” (verse 14). The position that our Lord Jesus Christ occupies during the present age, we apprehend, is but very imperfectly understood; or, is too generally overlooked. He now occupies a position that may be illustrated by the case of Joseph after his captivity and suffering in Egypt. Genesis 41:40-44: “Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph’s hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had: and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot, in all the land of Egypt.” Here it is seen that Pharaoh invested Joseph with supreme and unlimited authority, reserving only the right to resume that authority when the end is accomplished for which this investment was made. During the period that this authority was in Joseph’s hands, all Pharaoh’s kingdom was to be ruled by Joseph’s word, and without his authority “no man should lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” It was only in the throne that Pharaoh reserved a superiority to Joseph; all other authority was made subject to him; even to the right to make and “*seal*” laws, as the king’s seal was put upon Joseph’s hand by Pharaoh’s own act. Thus God, the Father, exalted Jesus, after His sufferings and death, to His throne in heaven.