

DETOURS

DETOURS, PART 4: PLANS AND DREAMS

Today, it seems like everyone is all about dreaming big. There is an entire industry that centers on selling people a dream lifestyle built on travel, money, and image. The problem with dream culture is that it often ignores the important planning that makes dreams come true.

BIG IDEA: A dream doesn't mean a thing apart from God's plan.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you do when you have a weird or scary dream?
2. Read Genesis 41:1-16. The king of Egypt has two nightmares that Joseph says came from God. Joseph says God is warning the king that Egypt will experience seven years of bumper crops followed by seven years of drought. This is not the first time the Genesis writer has said God spoke to people who did not believe in him. What do you think this says about God?
3. After interpreting the king's two dreams, Joseph gets promoted from prisoner to palace official. It's not entirely clear what his job is. Based on what you know of Joseph's story, do you think Joseph was more like one of many vice presidents who report to a CEO, or was he the one and only second-in-command to the king?
4. From your knowledge of Joseph's story so far, how would you have treated the people who hurt you along the way? Why?
5. Read Genesis 41:32-36. As impressed as Egypt's king was with Joseph's ability to interpret the two dreams, he seemed even more in awe at Joseph's ability to think ahead. People today seem to have trouble planning ahead for themselves, whether it has to do with money for retirement, a place to live that doesn't have two flights of stairs, and money in reserve for assisted living. What makes it so hard to plan ahead?
6. God gives Joseph a plan for protecting Egypt from the time of famine. What do these verses teach us about planning ahead? Psalm 20:4;90:12;143:8; Proverbs 15:22;16:3,9; 19:21; Isaiah 55:8-9; Luke 14:28; Romans 12:1-2.
7. In Genesis 41:33-34, we see that God gave the plan and Joseph put it into action. What plans have the Lord given to you? This could be business ideas, plans for helping those in the community, plans concerning your future (such as continuing your education), etc.

Moving Forward

Most of us rarely get dramatic dreams from God like Joseph. When faced with difficult situations, what one thing can you do to get more clarity? Prayer is as much about listening as talking. Spend some time this week in solitude, silence, and listening for God's plan for you in 2021

Changing Your Mind

“It is beyond my power to do this,” Joseph replied. “But God can tell you what it means and set you at ease.” - Genesis 41:16

