

WHEN WE BRING GOD IN

“The LORD is with you when you are with him.”

—2 CHRONICLES 15:2

Circumstances we can't help will sometimes put us in a position we don't like and certainly don't want, so we'll often plead with God to get us out of that situation. Joseph took another stance. He never asked to be relieved of the terrible circumstances he was in, but lived through them knowing God was with him.

Joseph was the eleventh of twelve sons born to Jacob. He was greatly favoured by his father, which resulted in jealousy and envy from his older brothers. Intent on killing him, they tossed him down a well, but then sold him to Ishmaelite traders for 20 shekels of silver. He was bought as a slave in Egypt by a high official, named Potipher. Potipher liked and trusted Joseph. He put him in charge of all his assets, but Joseph was continually hounded by sexual advances from Potipher's wife. Eventually, she falsely accused him of trying to rape her, and Joseph spent prime years of his life in prison.

As a youth, God had gifted Joseph with the ability to interpret dreams, and he used his gift with fellow prisoners, one of them a former cupbearer to the Pharaoh. As Joseph had interpreted, within three days the cupbearer was released and restored to his position. Two years later, when Pharaoh was troubled by dreams, the cupbearer remembered Joseph. He was summoned to the palace to interpret the dreams, which spoke of seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. Joseph made suggestions on how to survive the famine, and Pharaoh, greatly impressed, said, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the

spirit of God?” (Genesis 41:38) In one meeting, Joseph had gone from a dungeon to a palace and been made Prime Minister of Egypt.

Joseph didn't choose to be dumped in a well, nor to be sold as a slave, then falsely accused and thrown in prison, but these were the circumstances in which he knew the Lord was with him. “God with us” isn't only about His presence, but about His working in our lives. God was with Joseph because every day Joseph was with Him, and God used him to salvage a remnant of His people from the famine in Canaan from which would descend the nation of Israel.

God turns our most disparaging circumstances into a means of working out His purpose. When we bring Christ in, He doesn't come as a kind of ‘Mr. Fix It’ in our time of need. He comes as Lord and takes charge of our lives. If we are with Him, He is with us, and our lives will take a turn that can only be explained by the fact God is doing something.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, how grateful I am that you're always there... always my shelter, my refuge, my comfort, my strength. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: How does living with God everyday prepare me for the unexpected valleys?