

7-16-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-7

Purpose: Provoke people to follow the example of Joseph's faith in God and pass every test until God fulfills His promise.

Truth for Today: God-given dreams will be tested but those who remain faithful to God will see their dreams fulfilled.

Text: Hebrews 11:20-22

Topic: Faith, Joseph, Test, Forgiveness, Adversity, Sexual Morality, Attitude

Series Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives

Series purpose: Provoke people to have faith in God that is aligned with His will so we can obediently endure difficulty and receive what He promises in His timing.

Series Truth for Today: Faith that endures becomes faith that receives God's promise.

Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-7

I. Introduction

A. Review series: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, a vs. by vs. walk through Heb. 11.

B. Last week we talked about how Abraham's faith was tested. Today we'll see Joseph's faith was tested while He waited on God to fulfill his dream. Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob, the father of the 12 tribes of Israel. Joseph had a dream at 17 that would define his life's calling, to save the world from a catastrophic famine. The next few decades were a roller coaster ride of spiritual tests, but he remained faithful to God and ultimately saw his God-given dream come to pass. Like Abraham, his faith was tested but he faithfully endured, never giving up on God, and was rewarded for it.

C. Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-7

D. Truth for Today: God-given dreams will be tested but those who remain faithful to God will see their dreams fulfilled.

II. Joseph, man of faith and savior of the world

A. [Hebrews 11:20–22 (NLT) It was **by faith that Isaac promised blessings for the future to his sons**, Jacob and Esau. ²¹ It was **by faith that Jacob, when he was old and dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons and bowed in worship** as he leaned on his staff. ²² It was **by faith that Joseph, when he was about to die, said confidently that the people of Israel would leave Egypt**. He even commanded them to **take his bones** with them when they

left.] All this was anchored in God's promise to Abraham and by faith in God's Word guided their life towards God's promises.

- iii. Joseph saved the Jews from a famine, passed the testing of his faith, and fulfilled His God given destiny. (Ge. Ch. 37-50)
- A. Jacob and his 12 sons were living in Canaan, [Ps 105:16 –23 (NLT) He (**God**) called for a **famine on the land of Canaan**, cutting off its food supply.
1. Canaan was the land promised to Abraham. Logical thinking says, they'd just live there forever and become stronger and be blessed more and more. God had a different plan. He was strategically moving them to Egypt as part of the plan of redemption under Moses, e.g., the Passover Lamb// Jesus; giving the OT Law
 2. Life App #1: Sometimes what happens to us seems like a contradiction of God's promise, but God has a master plan and is ultimately in control of our lives and the movement of world history.
- B. [Vs. 17, Then **he (God) sent someone to Egypt ahead of them— Joseph, who was sold as a slave.**] God didn't rent Joseph an air-conditioned chariot to get him there.
1. Backstory: At 17, Joseph's life was defined by a dream, [Genesis 37:5–8 (NLT) **Joseph had a dream...he told his brothers about it...**⁷“We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!”⁸ His brothers responded...**Do you actually think you will reign over us?**” And **they hated him...**] His jealous brothers threw him in a pit to die but later sold him as a slave in Egypt. God used the evil act of his brothers to accomplish His will. Joseph endured 3 periods of unjust suffering. 23 years later the dream was fulfilled.
 2. [Ro. 8:28 (NLT)...we know that God causes **everything to work together for the good** of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.]
 3. Life App #2: God can bring something good out of something bad, e.g., my mom left her home in Latvia because of communist Russia. I became a preacher.
- C. [Vs 18 They (*Slave owners and jailer*) bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar.¹⁹ **Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the Lord tested Joseph's character.**]

1. Life App #3: The suffering and hardship we experience is a spiritual test to prove whether we will stop following God when life is difficult. Joseph would one day be the 2nd most powerful, wealthy man in Egypt if he passed the tests.

D. Joseph faced many tests

1. As a slave, his attitude was tested. He was in a place he didn't want to be doing what he didn't want to do but still held on to his faith in God and did his work with excellence. [Ge. 39:2–4 (NLT) The Lord was with Joseph, so **he succeeded in everything he did** as he **served** in the home of his Egyptian master. ³ Potiphar...realized that **the Lord was with Joseph**...⁴...so he put him in charge of...everything he owned.] The same thing happened in jail. // our job.

- a. Life App #3: Our attitude at work can determine whether God blesses us.

2. His morality was tested when Potiphar's wife tried to get him to sleep with her. [Ge. 39:6–9 (NLT)...Joseph was a very handsome...⁷ and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded. ⁸ But Joseph refused...⁹...**How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God.**"]

- a. Life App #4: Sexual temptation is a test to see if we will follow God's path of purity or be overcome by lust.

3. Joseph did right but was unjustly punished. This was a spiritual test. Potiphar's wife lied and said Joseph tried to rape her, so Potiphar put him in prison. [Genesis 39:20–23 (NLT) So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison...²¹ But **the LORD was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love**...²² Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of...everything that happened in the prison. ²³...**The LORD was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.**]

- a. Once again, his attitude was tested. He could have gotten mad at God and acted like all the other prisoners. He didn't; He kept following God in spite of his circumstances and experienced God's blessing in a season of hardship.

- b. Life App #5: When we're treated unfairly, our response will determine what happens next.

- E. One day, suddenly and unexpectedly, everything changed. Pharaoh had a dream about the future illustrated by grain and cows. Pharaoh's butler remembered Joseph had interpreted a dream for him in prison and told

pharaoh. [Ge. 41:14–16 (NLT) Pharaoh ...quickly brought from the prison....¹⁵ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream last night, and no one here can tell me what it means. But I have heard that...you can interpret it.”¹⁶ **“It is beyond my power to do this,”** Joseph replied. **“But God can tell you what it means...²¹ Joseph was put in charge of all the king’s household; he became ruler over all the king’s possessions...]**

1. That day, Joseph passed his final test of humility. His trust in God remained steadfast for 13 years. He didn’t allow himself to become mad at God and get bitter. He didn’t take credit for what God did through him. God rewarded him and he became the VP of Egypt, wealthy and married a beautiful woman.
2. Life App #6: Joseph learned the greatest lesson of life, humility, i.e., all I am, all I can do and all I have is because of the Lord.

IV. Conclusion: There was one more test, Joseph passed the test of forgiveness

A. 10 years later his brothers came to Egypt to buy food and bowed down before him just like the dream. Several years later their dad died, [Ge. 50:15–21 (NLT) But now that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers became fearful. “Now Joseph will show his anger and **pay us back** for all the wrong we did to him,” ...¹⁹ But Joseph replied, “Don’t be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you?²⁰ You intended to harm me, but **God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.**]

1. For most of his life, Joseph didn’t know he’d be an integral part of God’s plan to save them from starvation. He could have gotten even and taken revenge. He didn’t. He saw the hand of God at work behind the scenes and chose to forgive the evil done to him. His faith in God empowered him to endure difficulty and receive blessings too many to count. God did it for Joseph and can do it for us. Life App # 7: [Romans 8:28 (NLT) And we know that **God causes everything to work together for the good** of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.] We can expect the same in our life.

V. Response

- A. Prayer: You’re facing a spiritual test: Your attitude during hardship, sexual morality, treated unfairly, unforgiveness, etc. Your faith is tested and you need God’s help.
- B. Souls

- VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.
- VII. Supplemental Material
- A. We've talked about faith and creation, and heroes of faith like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Sarah, Abraham, and Isaac. Last week we talked about how Abraham passed the test when his faith was tested. Each week we try to find 'Life Applications' to help us apply Biblical truth in everyday life.
- B. [Eph. 6:5–8 (NLT) Slaves, obey your earthly masters...**Serve** them **sincerely** as you would serve Christ...⁷ Work with **enthusiasm**, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. ⁸ Remember that the **Lord will reward** each one of us for the good we do...]