

## Can You Stand to Be Blessed?

<sup>39</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you." <sup>40</sup> You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you." <sup>41</sup> And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." <sup>42</sup> Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. - Genesis 41:39-42

**C**an you stand to be blessed? This is an important question for each of us as we walk with God, anticipating the fulfillment of His promises in our lives. I can hardly imagine a more disappointing reality than to be in line for God's blessing, but be unready or unable to receive it. In fact, the only thing I can think of worse than not being under the flow of God's blessing, is to be there, and to forfeit His goodness and faithfulness toward us.

In Genesis 41, Joseph has been used of God to so sufficiently resolve Pharaoh's dilemma that the king of Egypt responds by promoting him to a position of national authority that is second in power only to Pharaoh himself. Overnight, Joseph has gone from the prison to the palace, his circumstances changing suddenly and radically as he is "...clothed...in garments of fine linen..." and decorated with "...a gold chain around his neck."

There are several lessons we can glean from Joseph's sudden rise from bondage to blessing as we prepare to answer affirmatively the key question, can I stand to be blessed? As we walk with God through difficult, daunting and sometimes dark circumstances, we would do well to remember three lessons from the life of Joseph.

### God is always with me!

Joseph, falsely accused of attempting to violate his master's wife, was thrown into prison. While jailed he met two of Pharaoh's chief servants, his butler and baker. One of them had also been falsely accused of a crime while the other was in fact guilty of committing high treason against the state. One night, these two men were each startled by disturbing dreams. Joseph's interpreted each of their dreams, prophesying accurately concerning the butler's innocence and the baker's guilt. As the butler was being discharged, following his acquittal, Joseph urged him to remember him once he was reinstated to his post. He did not. And Joseph found himself sitting in jail for a crime he did not commit an additional two long years.

I can imagine Joseph feeling a bit discouraged. I can see him being overcome by the notion that his dreams were never going to come true – that his destiny in God would never be fulfilled. After all, how could it possibly happen from where he was?

But God was right there with Joseph just as He is always right there with us. It was God who kept his brothers from killing him when they instead dropped him into a pit. God was there when they sold him into slavery and it was God who ensured he ended up in the house of Potiphar, Pharaoh's chief steward. God was there, strengthening Joseph's resolve to honor his covenant with Him when tested by the advances of a confused "Mrs. Potiphar". And He was there whispering Joseph's name into the ear of the butler a full two years after he'd forgotten all about the Hebrew slave who'd interpreted his dream. God is always with us, even when we cannot detect Him. If we are to maintain our faith through challenging times, we must remember that God is always with us!

### **God is able!**

From where Joseph stood there in that prison, his future may have begun to look a bit bleak, as if there was just no way out of his current circumstances. Sometimes, we too, can live through situations that seem so hopeless that it appears to be sheer foolishness to maintain a posture of faith, holding onto the notion that God is still able to do what we believe He will do.

But God is able! Able to do what, you ask? Whatever He wants to do and He is well able to use whatever He wants in order to get us to where He wants us to be. Romans 8:28 reminds us that God takes everything in our lives - the good, the bad and the ugly - and works it all together so that the resulting outcome is actually "for our good". If we're going to trust God as we move through trials, tests and temptations in our lives, we do well to remember that God is able!

### **God is not done with me yet!**

If there is but one more thing we must remember about God as we deal with would-be-doubt-producing difficulties in life, it is that God is not done with us yet. In fact, He is never "done" with us. God is constantly planting, cultivating, growing and pruning His character in our lives as He methodically guides us from faith to faith (Rom. 1:17) and from glory to glory (II Cor. 3:18).

Friends who said they would be there for us may have gotten tired and moved on. Family that swore they would look out for us may become conveniently quiet during tough times. But our faithful God, stays right there with us, working all things to our benefit, as He keeps on working on us, perfecting in us the image of His dear son, Jesus Christ, and preparing us for blessing, honor and promotion to greater and greater realms of authority and influence.

Those who understand and believe in their hearts that these statements about God are true, are more likely to find themselves properly positioned for promotion when the Lord whispers in someone's ear that it is time to call their name. Will you be ready when your time has come? Will you be ready to move, as suddenly as Joseph, from the prison of your circumstance into the palace of your destiny, without hesitating as you reflect upon the challenges you've had to endure?

These questions and how you answer are key determining factors as you attempt to answer the broader and more significant question at hand: **Can you stand to be blessed?**