



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions Seeing God Through Suffering Series, Lesson 11

Lesson Title: Joseph – Waiting on God

Take Home Point: Wait on God... no matter how long!

Warm-Up:

Is it fun to wait? It can be. Think of the happy anticipation that is part of waiting for a special day such as a wedding or Christmas Day. But what if as you waited you suffered injustice, pain or humiliation? Wouldn't be as much fun, would it? And what if, on top of suffering while waiting, you had no idea when that special time would come. In fact, what if you weren't even sure it would come? The fun is probably gone. Sound farfetched? Consider the Jews of Europe who were in hiding during Hitler's Third Reich. Certainly they suffered unjustly while they waited for freedom. They had no idea how long it would be; they didn't even know if it would ever come. How does that make you feel? Keep those feelings in mind as you read the account of Joseph.

Read: Genesis 37-50; Romans 8:28

Observation (What happened?):

From Genesis 39, what repeated phrase sums up why Joseph succeeded in overcoming trials?

From Romans 8:28, in what things does God work for good?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Do you think Joseph was happy about what happened to him or that he enjoyed it?

What attitude of Joseph stands out in this account of his life?

Insight:

How long do we have to wait for good to come? We are impatient, even when we trust God to work his good. Why? Few seek to hurt or suffer injustice or be forgotten. Few rush to hardship and pain. Our deepest nature prefers ease and smooth sailing through life. But life's seas are stormy, and as we learned last week, trouble comes if for no other reason than that it is a sinful world where bad choices cause us to suffer and sometimes bad things just happen. So how long do we wait? For Joseph it was 13 years of ups and downs from the time he was sold as a slave until Pharaoh appointed him second in the kingdom. Is that a long time? I imagine he thought so. But human time is not a very good measure of the pace of God's plan. As God says in Isaiah 55:8-9, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (NIV) It really is enough to know that God is in control and that he is always with us. Remember what Paul writes in Romans 8:31, *"What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?"* (NIV)

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Can you see good in your difficult situation? What can you learn from Joseph's story?

How does Joseph's story help you help others in trouble, pain, or unjust circumstances?

Kingdom Quest Year 2 – Lesson 11