

Remnant Life Church
November 26, 2017
Genesis
The “Trouble” with Dreams
Genesis 37:1-11

- Genesis is filled with many of the great, iconic characters of the Bible
- Adam, Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Esau, and...Joseph
- He is without question, following to Jesus, the one who I want to pattern my life after.
 - He started off like most adolescent boys – full of himself and not always very careful with his words
 - He not only endured what happened to him through the course of his life but flourished
 - He made others around him look good by his resourcefulness, humility, and integrity
 - He did not allow his promotions to change who he was
 - He never blamed anyone (including God) for the difficult situations he encountered but simply did his best

READ – Gen 37:1-11

- Dreams in the time of Joseph were considered given from the divine and were taken very seriously and, most times, at face value
- Interpretations were sometimes used
- Several elements of what Joseph did worked against him
 - He is the second youngest of Jacobs children
 - Birth order meant level of importance
 - He is only 17 years old
 - 30 was considered the age of a responsible, independent adult
 - Jesus’ ministry; Joseph becoming PM of Egypt
 - He was not even old enough to help tend the flocks
 - His role would have been gopher or runner
 - He would also bring news back and forth to the father
 - This is why we read that he brought a bad report back to his father (37:2)
 - 10 men together in the fields and woods
 - Today we call that a hunting camp
 - Joseph is obviously the favorite
 - So much so that his father makes him a palm/sole tunic (palm of the hand/sole of the foot)
 - Only 2 people in the family wore this type of robe – the head of the tribe and his designated heir
 - No wonder his older brothers hated him
 - **V 4** -...*could not speak a kind word to him.*
 - The basic word of greeting was Shalom

- They could not even say help to him – ignored him completely
- That was not the only reason they hated him
 - He did not have to do the work of herding the flocks
 - Spending more time with their father
 - They saw their father elevate him and now it seemed God was doing the same thing through the dreams
- The dreams elevated Joseph over both his brothers and his father and mother
 - Rachel had died when Joseph was about 7 giving birth to Benjamin
 - Because they were so young it likely that one of Jacob's other wives would have taken them in as their surrogate mother
- Jacob was reliving the struggles of his own youth growing up with favoritism
 - Isaac favored Esau and Rebekah favored Jacob
 - Their actions caused great turmoil in the family
 - Jacob did not learn the lesson but passed it on to his own children
- But at this age Joseph did not use wisdom (how many wise 17 years old are there?)
 - Rather than guard how he told this to his brothers he just blurted it out
 - Rather than stop, after the first one and hearing their reaction, he told another even worse one
 - There are no 2 greater companions in our day-to-day lives than wisdom with a cautious tongue
 - Joseph did not demonstrate that
 - Immune because of his status with his father?
- Jacob
 - Even in his rebuke he *"kept the matters in mind"*
 - In other words, what if this was of God?

Two things to keep in mind about dreams God has given you

1. Don't give up because your dreams are rejected by others

- a. If God has placed a vision in your heart through the reading of His Word, time spent in prayer, or the words of someone close to you, hold fast to it
- b. Yes, God will use others to confirm something or perhaps bring a word of caution
- c. But satan also likes to get in on that as a counterfeit
 - i. **John 8:44** - *He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*
- d. It comes down to faith
 - i. **Heb 11:1** - *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*
 - ii. Do you have faith in who and what God has called you to be
 - iii. You may have to go it alone but be prepared for what that means

2. Don't give up just because your dreams are not realized right away (some examples)

- a. Abraham first told by God to leave his land for Canaan when he was 75 (**Gen 12:1**)

- i. Abraham intervened to get a son when he was 86 ([Gen 16:15-16](#))
 - ii. Isaac was born when he was 100 ([Gen 21:2](#))
 - iii. From the promise to the fulfillment was 25 years
- b. God told Noah he was going to destroy the world with a great flood ([Gen 6:13;17](#))
 - i. Noah was around 550 years old when God told him to start building the ark
 - 1. Based on the fact that Noah was 500 when Shem was born ([Gen 5:32](#))
 - 2. All his sons were born, had wives, and families
 - ii. Noah was 600 when the flood began ([Gen 7:6](#))
 - iii. At least 50 years from the promise to the fulfillment
- c. Joseph
 - i. 17 when he had the dreams ([Gen 37:2](#))
 - ii. Sold into slavery and in prison until he was 30 years old ([Gen 41:46](#))
 - iii. That means for 13 years he was either a slave or a prisoner
 - iv. It was 2 years after he had interpreted the dreams for the baker and cup bearer ([Gen 41:1](#))

3. The “trouble” with dreams...

- a. You must make sure they are from God (discernment)
- b. You must ask God for wisdom for what to do with it
- c. You must have faith if you believe it is truly from God
- d. You must be patient for God to bring it to fulfillment

4. What do we learn from the account of young Joseph and his dreams?

- a. God will communicate with us in a variety of ways
- b. His will, and not the method He speaks to us, should be our focus
- c. Our circumstances should not steal our faith, our hope, and our joy

It was a mild October afternoon in 1982 and Badger Stadium in Madison, Wisconsin was packed. Over 60,000 die-hard University of Wisconsin fans were watching their beloved football team take a beating at the hands of the Michigan State Spartans. What seemed odd, however, was that as the score became more and more lopsided bursts of cheers and applause kept being heard in the stands. It was only natural that some people began to wonder who these strange people were who were cheering while their team was being pummeled. Well, as it turns out seventy miles away from Badger stadium the Milwaukee Brewers were beating the St. Louis Cardinals in game three of the World Series. Many of the Badger fans in the stands were listening to portable radios and responding to something else besides what was happening right in front of their eyes. In many ways that is a pretty accurate description of what the Christian life is like. We might, like Joseph, be in the midst of difficult even horrible circumstances in this world, yet we will always have something to cheer about if we are willing to recognize that the circumstances directly in front of us need not define who we are or what God has promised us.

God will speak to us in many ways including dreams, but what He desires most is for you to seek and love Him with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. ([Mark 12:30](#))