

Joseph: Suffering in Slavery and Prison

Genesis 39-40

Read Genesis 39:1-18.

The Lord was with Joseph as he served faithfully in Potiphar's household.

- What truths about God's character are revealed in Genesis 39:1-6?
- How does remembering God's presence help you in hard circumstances?

Principle: God is with His children when they suffer.

Read Genesis 39:19-23.

Joseph was unfairly imprisoned.

- What might Joseph have learned in his trials that prepared him for future leadership?
- What did you learn from God during a hard time that you are putting to good use today?

Principle: God is at work in His children's suffering.

Read Genesis 40.

After Joseph interpreted his dream, the cupbearer forgot him in prison.

- How did Joseph treat the cupbearer and baker?
- How have you avoided discouragement during difficult circumstances?

Principle: God never forgets His children.

Review Genesis 39-40.

- What attribute of God is most meaningful to you in this week's scripture passage? Why?

Main truth: God is always with us in our suffering.

Scripture Memory Verse

“When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant.” – Genesis 39:3-4a

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Exploring the Christian Faith

An Attribute of God

from this week's passage

Omnipresent (everywhere)

God is present everywhere. There is nowhere in the physical universe where God is not. There is nowhere in the spiritual world where God is not. God is with His children no matter where they are. Satan can only be in one place at a time, but God is present everywhere at all times.

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A Basic Truth of the Christian Faith

What is the purpose of my life?

My purpose is to know God, love Him, enjoy Him and glorify Him.¹ God made me for Himself. I belong to God because He created me.² When I know Him, love Him, enjoy Him and glorify Him, I am truly satisfied.³

Psalm 16:11¹; Genesis 1:26²; 1 Peter 4:11³

Think About It

Isn't my life about knowing myself?

We cannot really know ourselves, the world or how we should live without knowing the true God. We know ourselves by looking to God, not inward. Tools work best when used for the purpose they were intended. People live best when living according to their purpose in life. People are created to enjoy God. God made all people to be like Him – in His image. He is holy, wise, creative and loving. God designed people to be in relationship with Him.

Isn't it just as important to achieve my potential, make friends and enjoy life?

True success is glorifying God in whatever He calls us to do. Our life goals will always be too small until we understand God made us for Himself. Success in school, career or marriage is important, but these things will never completely fulfill us. Even friendship does not satisfy if we seek only to be popular and have fun with friends. Something will always be missing until we realize God made us to enjoy Him. A piece of fruit may be beautiful, but we do not enjoy it until we taste it. God invites us to taste and see His goodness (Psalm 34:8). The more time we spend getting to know God, the more we will enjoy Him and enjoy life itself.

What does it mean to glorify God?

God is glorified when His character is revealed and people understand what He is like. Everything God created reveals something about Him. The stars, mountains and fish in the sea all show God's greatness and goodness. This glorifies God. God made people to display His character. Loving people who are difficult to love, doing the right thing even when it is hard, being generous, kind, patient and forgiving – all these things please and glorify God because they express His character. God's pleasure with us gives our hearts joy.

To learn more Basic Truths of the Christian Faith, visit mybsf.org.