

UNTIL THE TIME THAT HIS WORD CAME

Yosef ben Yakob was really just a young kid when he entered the technology sector in Silicon Valley, California. His adopted English name “Joe” just seemed to fit his movie-star good looks, and his engaging personality and easy grasp of business skills quickly propelled him ahead of everyone else at one of the biggest companies in the state. The CEO made no secret of taking a shine to him, and Joe knew that some day he could easily become president of the firm, but he made one terrible tactical error – he let the eleven equally-ambitious coworkers in his department know about his lofty aspirations. From then on, it was all out war every single day at work. The CEO was elderly and probably a bit naïve, so he was blissfully unaware of the corporate chaos that was about to unfold in the offices downstairs.

It was on one very ordinary Monday morning that the resentment of Joe’s coworkers resulted in the second worst day of his life. He didn’t have a clue that the “hostile takeover” was coming – he was totally unprepared. With a series of well-placed traps and well-timed lies, they assassinated his character and trashed his professional reputation before Joe even had his first cup of coffee at break on that fateful day. The impeccably fabricated evidence was so convincing that even Joe knew he could never return to work at the company – they didn’t have to fire him, he resigned in disgrace before the newspapers broke the horrible financial scandal that only he knew was absolutely false.

No one would hire Yosef ben Yakob anywhere in the state after that. He was forced to relocate to South America and go to work for a foreign corporation that offered meagre pay and almost no benefits. Not only did the former golden boy have to learn new operating systems, he now had to negotiate a new culture that was incredibly strange to him. In time however, his people skills and talent once again carried him to the front of the pack. But worse disaster was lurking right around the corner.

It was late on a Thursday afternoon when it happened – when the secretary with the sensual accent, tight clothes and loose morals finally made her play for the handsome new man in the office. To be honest, Joe almost threw it all away in that moment, whether because of lust, anger, bitterness, or boredom he couldn’t say. Everyone else had gone home, and the church he grew up in was a vague memory, so it really wouldn’t have mattered ... or would it? He would tell you even today that only God saved him from really messing up his life that Thursday.

Joe had never heard the saying “Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned,” but he experienced it firsthand the very next morning. It was déjà vu, watching helplessly once again as his reputation was destroyed.

With the language and cultural barriers working against him, Joe couldn’t even attempt to explain his side of the story. The charge was attempted rape, and not one lawyer in the city would touch his case – under their country’s law, he was already convicted. And when the cold steel bars of a foreign prison two thousand miles from home slammed shut behind him, Joe experienced loneliness and fear like he had never dreamed possible. It was truly the absolute worst day he had ever lived.

It took months of effort, working every day to be a model inmate in the filth and sheer brutality of that foreign jail, but Prisoner # 58672 finally got to talk with an influential man in the government about his case. He seemed willing to help at the time, but apparently put Joe’s file at the bottom of the pile on his desk and then conveniently forgot all about it. The months dragged on, eventually turning into years of prison time, but even then Joe refused to turn into a hardened criminal. One would have expected him to become quite bitter over the hardships and unjust treatment, but strangely that was not the case at all. No one could ever quite figure it out, but many of his cellmates over the years would tell you it had something to do with Joe’s incredible faith. The whole time he was in prison, Joe never quit expecting God to come through for him.

You may have already figured this out by now ... It’s Joseph, son of Jacob; Israel and Egypt, not California and South America, brothers, not coworkers; his father Jacob, not a CEO, Potiphar’s wife, not a secretary. But the prison, the hurt, the betrayal, the abandonment, the pain, and the long days and nights of waiting – they feel just the same today as they did five thousand years ago. And they feel just the same for YOU as they did for Joseph.

And so, here is a principle from the word of the Lord for you today ...

Psalm 105:17-19 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

PRAYER (?)

This message cannot have its intended effect unless we establish first in our minds the absolute POWER of the Word of God. The Bible is not just a best-selling book, it is a SUPERNATURAL book!

Deuteronomy 8:3 (MOSES) And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

1 Kings 8:56 (SOLOMON) Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

Psalms 56:10-11 (DAVID) In God will I praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word. In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

Psalms 138:2 (DAVID) I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

Psalms 119 ...

- v. 11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee
- v. 16 I will not forget thy word
- v. 25 Quicken thou me according to thy word
- v. 28 Strengthen thou me according to thy word
- v. 42 I trust in thy word
- v. 58 Be merciful unto me according to thy word
- v. 74 I have hoped in thy word
- v. 89 For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven
- v. 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path
- v. 116 Uphold me according unto thy word
- v. 133 Order my steps in thy word
- v. 160 Thy word is true from the beginning
- v. 161 My heart standeth in awe of thy word
- v. 162 I rejoice at thy word
- v. 169 Give me understanding according to thy word
- v. 170 Deliver me according to thy word
- v. 172 My tongue shall speak of thy word

Isaiah 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Jeremiah 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

Ezekiel 37:3-4 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

Ecclesiastes 8:4 Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?

Psalms 147:15 He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

Psalms 107:20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

AND WE'RE NOT EVEN OUT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT YET !!!

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Acts 12:24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

Acts 19:20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

2 Thessalonians 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

2 Timothy 2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

1 Peter 1:24-25 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

Revelation 19:11-13 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

AND NOW BACK TO JOSEPH ...

Psalm 105:17-19 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

- Joseph's brethren SOLD him, but it was God who SENT him.
- Under inspiration, the psalmist gives us details that the book of Genesis omits. Joseph was not just thrown in prison, he was chained up like an animal ("whose feet they hurt with fetters"). And the phrase "he was laid in iron" actually says in Hebrew "iron entered into his soul." Today, we might say "the heavens were brass" for Joseph – it was a dark night of the soul, and he felt like his prayers were not getting through to God, even like God had forsaken him.
- God had put divine dreams in Joseph's heart as a very young man; God had given him the promises that he was now suffering for!
- THE SAME WORD THAT BRINGS US DELIVERANCE WILL FIRST PUT US TO THE TEST UNTIL GOD'S TIMING IS COMPLETE.
- There is a TRYING word and a DELIVERING word – but it is all the WORD, so we can have total confidence in it either way!
- Think about it! Joseph's dreams could never have come to pass if he had lived his life comfortably in Israel. The spiritual education that he needed came through years of hardship in Egypt.
- Joseph's trials arose out of the very word in which he believed ... but his trials also brought about the very word in which he believed.
- OUR TRIAL BY THE WORD ACTUALLY FULFILS THE WORD!
- **UNTIL THE TIME THAT HIS WORD CAME ... HE HELD ON!**

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.