

February 12-Genesis 43

Do you realize that we serve a God who transcends any and all human rules or cultural practices? When God calls you to something, He is able to clear obstacles that we would never even consider moving. This is certainly true in the life of Joseph. Joseph had a vision one day that his older brothers would bow down to him. This was highly offensive because in their culture, it was unheard of for the youngest son to rule over the oldest. This simply did not happen and it would not if the brothers had anything to do with it. Joseph certainly must have wondered how God was going to accomplish this feat and I would be willing to bet that he definitely did not think that God would bring about this plan by making him a ruler in Egypt! However, this is exactly what God did and it was totally against any and every cultural norm of the day.

Genesis 43 tells us that Joseph's brothers returned to Egypt and upon their arrival, they were invited to eat with Joseph. In verses 31-33 Genesis 43 gives us an account of how dinner took place that evening. The Bible says that Joseph, his brothers, and the Egyptians were all served separately "because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians". Isn't this an interesting picture? Here are Egyptians who refuse to even eat at the same table with Hebrews and yet they are being ruled by one!

God does things like this from time to time and when He does, we should all be amazed. If God had told Joseph years ago His plan for Joseph's life I would have to believe that Joseph would have thought this plan would be too good to be true. I mean after all, the Egyptians feel like even eating in the presence of Hebrews is too much to stomach, how would they be ruled by one? The lesson today is very simple, don't let perceived obstacles or cultural norms get in the way of your faith that God can accomplish what He wants to accomplish with your life. It doesn't have to make worldly sense for God to do it for you. He has worked out stranger things and His power is not limited by man!

While Joseph's rise to prominence is truly remarkable, it is not the most remarkable occurrence in God's sovereign plan of redemption. You see, God in His wisdom chose to send His Son to be born in a stable surrounded by livestock. Jesus was not born into a powerful or prominent family. He was not considered royalty or even socially elite. Instead, God chose regular people like Joseph and Mary to be His instruments to bring the Savior of the world into existence. In so doing, God proved yet again that He chooses the "weak things of the world to shame the strong" (1 Corinthians 1:27). God is not limited by man's customs or cultures. Instead, He accomplishes His extraordinary purposes through ordinary people.