

## **FROM PRISON TO PRIME MINISTER**

### **Genesis 41:25-52**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION-**

- a. When Joseph was called out of prison to come before Pharaoh... he had been in Egypt for 13 years... he was approximately 30 years old.
- b. During those 13 years... Joseph had learned a lot about himself... and he had learned a lot about God.
- c. During those 13 years... God was preparing Joseph for a very important task ... the task of saving many people from starvation... including his own family.
- d. If anyone in the Old Testament could be seen as an example of a Spirit-filled believer in God... it would be Joseph.
- e. There is something different, distinctive, special and exceptional ... about a believer in Jesus Christ who is filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit of God.
- f. Pharaoh was a pagan... he was not a believer in the one true God... Pharaoh had no concept of the Holy Spirit... the third person of the Trinity.
- g. But after observing Joseph and hearing what Joseph had to say... Pharaoh knew there was something special about Joseph.
- h. And Pharaoh believed that something special...was the exceptional presence of God in Joseph's life.
- i. *Genesis 41:38 (NKJV) "And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?"*
- j. This would be a good place to understand the relationship the believer in Christ has... with the Holy Spirit of God.

#### **II. THE BELIEVER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT-**

- a. Before we were saved... it was the Holy Spirit who convicted us of our lostness and our sin... it was the Holy Spirit who warned us of hell and the judgment to come... it was the Holy Spirit who pursued us with the truth, grace and mercy of God.
- b. On the day we were saved... it was the Holy Spirit of God who opened our heart and mind to the reality of our lostness... and to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- c. On the day we were saved... it was the Holy Spirit who drew us to God.
- d. It was the Holy Spirit who enabled us to repent of our sins... it was the Holy Spirit who granted us the faith to believe the truth about Jesus Christ... it was the Holy Spirit who gave us the faith to receive Jesus as our Savior and Lord.
- e. When we believed... it was the Holy Spirit ... who applied the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross to our life... it was the power of the Holy Spirit who raised us from spiritual death... and made us alive in Christ... and a child of God.
- f. Without the work of the Holy Spirit in our life... none of us would be saved.
- g. The only reason you and I sought God for salvation... is because God was seeking for us first through the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- h. And the Bible teaches that the moment we gave our life to Christ... the Holy Spirit of God came to live within us... we were indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
- i. *Ephesians 1:13-14 (NKJV) "In Christ you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who*

*is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

- j. *Romans 8:9, 11 (NKJV) “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*
- k. *1 Corinthians 6:19 (NKJV) “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?”*
- l. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit... is God’s first installment of all the blessings that He has promised to believers.
- m. The Holy Spirit’s presence in our life... is God’s seal of ownership and the guarantee of our salvation.
- n. The Bible never commands believers to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit ... that happened the moment we gave our life to Christ.
- o. But while the Bible never commands believers to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit... the Bible does command believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- p. *Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV) “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.”*
- q. *Galatians 5:16 (NKJV) “I say then: Walk (or be filled with) the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”*
- r. What is the difference between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit... and being filled with the Spirit?

- s. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a one-time event that happened the moment we are saved... it will never be repeated in the life of the believer.
- t. The filling of the Holy Spirit is a continuous reality... that is to be repeated every day in the life of the believer.
- u. The word translated “filled” does not have the sense of something being filled...like a glass that is filled to the brim with water.
- v. The word translated “filled” has the sense of being controlled by something...this sense is found in several places in the Bible.
- w. *Luke 4:28 (NKJV) “So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled (controlled by) wrath.”*
- x. *Matthew 2:10 (NLT) “When they saw the star, they were filled (controlled by) joy!*
- y. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means... instead of our words, thoughts, attitudes, actions, desires and emotions being controlled by our fleshly human nature... they are controlled by the Holy Spirit of God who lives within us.
- z. While every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit... not every Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit.
- aa. To be filled with the Holy Spirit we must daily acknowledge the Holy Spirit’s presence in our life... and we must daily... and probably many times during the day... yield control of our words, thoughts, attitudes, actions, desires and emotions to Him.
- bb. While every Christian is to be filled with the Holy Spirit... many Christians never are... because they never acknowledge His presence in their life... and they never submit to His control in their life.

- cc. Being filled with the Spirit has nothing to do with so-called speaking in tongues ... or jumping pews... or acting like an idiot... or a thief or a crook...and blaming it on God.
- dd. Being filled with the Holy Spirit means living life under God's control ... living a life of joy... a life of service... a Christ-like life... that honors God... and makes a difference for God in this world.
- ee. What does a Spirit-filled life look like?... we can learn a lot from the life of Joseph.

### **III. THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN IS SOMEONE GOD CAN USE-**

- a. Joseph was someone God could use... in fact... God was going to use Joseph to save the lives of many people... including Joseph's own family.
- b. There are many Christians that God cannot use... a Christian who refuses to regularly yield control of their life to the indwelling Holy Spirit is essentially useless to God.
- c. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in our life... He is the power of God in our life... and if we are not plugged into God's power... God cannot use us like He wants to.
- d. A Christian who is not filled with the Holy Spirit ... is as useless to God as an unplugged, powerless refrigerator would be to us.
- e. If you want to be a useful Christian... a Christian God can use as He wants to... you must be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- f. You cannot operate in your own flesh... unplugged from God ... and be used by God like He wants to use you.  
(Someone God can use)

### **IV. THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN IS SENSITIVE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT-**

- a. Throughout this whole episode... you can see how Joseph was sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

- b. Joseph was not intimidated when he was brought before Pharaoh... he was not caught off guard.
- c. Because Joseph was sensitive to the Holy Spirit... because he was in tune with God...Joseph knew what to say...and he knew how to say it.
- d. God..directed his heart, his mind, his spirit, his attitude and his mouth.
- e. The Spirit-filled Christian will be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit... to the presence of the Holy Spirit... and to the power of the Holy Spirit.
- f. Christians who run off at the mouth and act ugly to others...  
Christians who do and say stupid, ugly and hurtful things... are not  
Christians who are sensitive to and controlled by the Holy Spirit.

(Someone God can use... sensitive to the Holy Spirit)

## **V. THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN POINTS PEOPLE TO GOD NOT THEMSELVES-**

- a. The first thing Joseph did when he came into Pharaoh's presence... was to point Pharaoh and all of his court to the one true God.
- b. *Genesis 41:16 "So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not me who can interpret dreams; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."*
- c. The God Joseph was talking about was not any of the false gods of Egypt... he was talking about the true God... the only God there is ... he was talking about Jehovah... the God of the Bible.
- d. And throughout this entire conversation ... Joseph keep pointing Pharaoh and the Egyptians to God.
- e. He did it in verse 25... verse 28... and in verse 32.
- f. For the Spirit-filled Christian... life is not about pointing people to themselves ... it is not about promoting themselves.

- g. For the Spirit-filled Christian... everything is about pointing people to God... everything is about honoring God... glorifying God... and pointing people to Christ.

(Someone God can use... sensitive to the Holy Spirit... points people to God)

## **VI. THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN IS HUMBLE-**

- a. Even after he was promoted to Prime Minister... second in power only to the Pharaoh in Egypt... even after he was given a Cadillac chariot ... and people were commanded to bow down before him... Joseph never acted in a prideful way.
- b. Joseph did not sit up in his big house and command people to serve him... he became a servant to those he ruled and oversaw... he worked hard and he worked diligently for the good of others... and for the glory of God.
- c. Spirit-filled Christians are not prideful Christians... they have the mind of Christ... they see themselves not as masters but as servants of God and servants of those they serve.
- d. Spirit-filled Christians are not big-headed... they are big-hearted ... the closer you get to God... the more humble you will be.

(Someone God can use... sensitive to the Holy Spirit... points people to God... humble)

## **VII. THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN IS FORGIVING-**

- a. After he was promoted... not a word is said about Joseph getting even with Potiphar's wife... or with the chief butler who had forgotten him in prison... he forgave them.
- b. And later on when Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to buy food and he recognized them... but they did not recognize him ... Joseph did not get even with those rascals who had so hated him and mistreated him... he forgave them.
- c. It is the Spirit-filled Christian who realizes that holding a grudge against those who wrong us is a waste of time... and a foothold into our life that we give the devil.

(Someone God can use... sensitive to the Holy Spirit... points people to God... humble...forgiving)

## **VIII. THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN RECIVES WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT-**

- a. When Joseph heard Pharaoh's dreams... he immediately knew their meaning... seven years of plenty... would be followed by seven years of famine and want.
- b. And when Joseph understood the meanings of those dreams... he knew immediately and instinctively what should be done... he advised Pharaoh that some of the harvest from the abundant years... should be stored up to feed the people during the famine years.
- c. Spirit-filled Christians are not infallible... they will not know everything ...and they will make mistakes at times.
- d. But God gives Spirit-filled Christians discernment and wisdom to understand His Word... to understand the times ...and how to apply God's Word to everyday life.
- e. This is why every preacher... every teacher... every Christian should be a Spirit-filled Christian.
- f. When a Christian does or says something stupid, evil and wrong ... you know they are not being led by the Holy Spirit.

(Someone God can use... sensitive to the Holy Spirit... points people to God... humble... wisdom)

## **IX. THE SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN WILL BE BLESSED BY GOD-**

- a. 13 years after Joseph came to Egypt as a slave... after the pit... after being in Potiphar's house... after being in prison... Joseph was elevated to Prime Minister of Egypt.
- b. He was given power, prestige, recognition, authority, wealth... he was given a wife...Asenath...and two sons... Manasseh... which means "forgetful" ... and Ephraim... which means "fruitful."
- c. And Joseph was given an Egyptian name... Zof-nath-Paaneah ... which means "God speaks and He lives."

- d. God blesses all of His children in many ways... but He is able to bless those believers who live the Spirit-filled life in special ways.

## **X. CONCLUSION-**

- a. When Joseph left Pharaoh's palace... he no doubt thought he had finally found God's purpose for all he had been through.
- b. But the story of Joseph... and the lessons we can learn from his life ... are not over.
- c. One day... over 20 years after they sold him into slavery... Joseph's brothers came before him having no idea that the Prime Minister of Egypt was their brother... and this fascinating story continues.