

The Word of the Lord tried Joseph

by Daniel Kenaston

This sermon focuses on the life of Joseph as a testament to holding on to the promises of God despite trials, temptations, loneliness, and unfair treatment. Joseph's story illustrates the importance of faith and readiness to receive God's blessings, even in the face of challenges. The sermon encourages listeners to trust in God's promises, remain faithful, and be prepared for the fulfillment of God's plans.

Scripture: Genesis 45:4, Genesis 41:14, Genesis 39:7, Genesis 37:5, Psalm 105:17, Psalm 139:23, Mark 9:24, Hebrews 10:35, 2 Timothy 4:7

Topics: "Faithfulness in Trials", "Trusting God's Promises"

Description

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Transcript

Greetings to all of you this morning, and it's good to see all of you. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share the Word of God. Special greetings to a couple of people who came here, maybe just to see me.

Thank you. I trust that we will all be blessed together by sharing the Word of God. In case it's a mystery to you how and why I'm here, I came for the Church Engaged conference, which ended last evening.

We had three very good days there, and I fly on Tuesday. So I'm here today and glad to have the chance to share the Word of God with all of you. I'm here alone because everybody who sees me says, is Christy here? And I realize that she's definitely the better half, but she's not here.

And the family is doing well there in Ghana. We are about 10 days away from a team coming. And so when I get back to Ghana, we have just a few days before the team arrives.

And we're looking forward to that. A couple of people from here and my son Nathaniel joins this team. So that's a special blessing that we're looking forward to.

I don't have to preach when I'm here. I would actually enjoy listening to some of you other ministers. But I do consider it a privilege to share the Word of God always.

I'd like to open and kind of make a platform for what I'd like to share. I'd like to just read a few promises of God. And I'm going to ask you not to turn to these, just so that rather than focusing on flipping, you're able to just focus on hearing these promises from the Word of God.

So if you can just quiet your heart for a few moments and listen to these promises, let them soak into your soul. They will kind of set the platform or the foundation for what we're going to share. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. Just setting a foundation of the promises of God for us.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him face to face. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and forever.

Amen. A couple of verses from the Old Testament. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him and his righteousness unto children's children.

Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord that walketh in his ways for thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands. Happy shalt thou be and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house.

Thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord bless thee out of Zion and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

Yea thou shalt see thy children's children and peace upon Israel. The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me. Thy mercy O Lord endureth forever forsake not the works of thine own hands.

And one more in the New Testament. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you. That ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work.

Let's pray. Father thank you for the opportunity to share your word together here. Father you've placed a burden on my heart.

There's something burning that you want me to share. I pray father that you will help me to do that. Lord beyond my inabilities, beyond my brain power, I pray that you will move by your spirit to apply your word to the hearts of your people.

Father that all of us together will be strengthened from having feasted on your word in this hour. Father I pray that you'd bless this church, my old home church. I pray that you would strengthen them, fill them with your spirit and strengthen their faith today.

In Jesus name amen. I would like you to turn with me to Psalms 105. After laying the foundation of just sort of grabbing a bunch of different promises, obviously we could read promises for the entire sermon and not get through even a portion of what we have in the scriptures, but I just wanted to read a few of those as a foundation for what I'd like to share.

Psalms chapter 105 is sort of a short version history and God is giving just a brief synopsis of the history of his people and we're sort of breaking into the middle of it because the verse that we want to grab is right in the middle of this history. Let's read Psalms 105 and verse 17 and reading. So we're breaking into this brief history of God's people.

Verse 17. 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. The king sent and loosed him, even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house and the ruler of his substance to bind his princes at his pleasure and to teach his senators wisdom.

The verse that I would like to focus on this morning is until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him. The word of the Lord tried him and I've been meditating for the last couple of months about what this verse means and what is implied by the fact that the word of God was testing or trying or putting on test or putting on trial the man named Joseph. And I'm kind of taking for granted that all of us are very familiar with the story of Joseph's life.

It would be wonderful if we could read all of it and go through it all verse by verse, but I'm sort of taking for granted that we're very familiar with the story of Joseph's life and what happened to him, how he shared his dreams with his brothers, and how his brothers sold him into slavery and all the various things that occurred in his life. We will grab a few verses here and there through the story of Joseph's life, but my main focus here this morning is to think about what it means for the word of God to try or test Joseph. And the reason why I read a number of promises to us this morning is that while individually this morning we may have various promises that God has given to us, we definitely have differed callings and different blessings and different destinies, but all of us together share the promises of God as a common foundation under our feet as part of the family of God.

And so I want us to think this morning what it meant for Joseph in his specific dreams and visions and promises that God had given to him. What did it mean in Joseph's life to live through all of those years of trial and suffering and time in prison? What did it mean for him to live through all of those difficulties while holding on to the word of God? While all the while knowing that God had made promises to him which did not appear to be being fulfilled in any way in Joseph's life, the word of the Lord tried Joseph. I'd like to suggest to us this morning that every one of us is meant to hold on to the promises of God, the general ones that we've just read and the specific ones that God may have given to you as you've prayed in your own personal life or prayed for your family or prayed for someone that you love to come to salvation or to overcome sin or to be healed or whatever it is that you're praying for.

I want to suggest to us that God gives us specific promises that we are meant to hold on to, but that holding on to those promises through apparent life situations which seem to mock the very promises of God in our life is what is meant by the word of the Lord tried Joseph. It's a particular type of a trial. It's a particular type of testing to be Joseph and hold in your heart for all those years God promised me that my family would one day bow before me.

God promised me that one day I would be in an elevated place of leadership. God promised me that there would be special blessings upon my life, but my everyday reality is I've got chains around my ankles and the only leadership position that they've given to me is to be in charge of food distribution in the dungeon. The word of the Lord tried Joseph.

I want us to just briefly look at Joseph's life. What are some of the ways in which the word of the Lord tested Joseph? How did God test the faith of this young man? We're in the book of Genesis chapter 37. I trust that you've been blessed by the life of Joseph.

There are so many different ways through so many different lenses through which you can view this amazing story of this young man. And so today I'd just like us to put on a slightly different lens and draw some lessons and encouragements for our life. I don't believe that any of us are being tried or tested at the level that Joseph was tested.

At least for myself, I don't believe that I have a promise from God that I'm ever going to be the prime minister of a great nation like Egypt was in Joseph's day. So I have promises of God that I'm holding on to, but I'm not sure that they're quite as great as the promises that Joseph was holding on to in terms of practical, you will be the prime minister of Egypt. All of your family will bow to you.

I don't have that kind of a promise. At the same time, while I've lived through a lot of trials and suffering and had my share of disappointments and challenges, I've never yet been chained in a dungeon for a couple of years. So I think Joseph sort of represents the extreme on this side of having a grand vision and promise and destiny and then living for a number of years in absolute suffering and the total opposite of what God had promised to him.

So while these two ends may be more extreme than what you and I are living in, I believe all of us have promises of God that we're holding on to, things which we have not yet seen. And the Bible defines that as being what faith is, holding on and believing for things that we have not yet seen. Faith is the substance of things hoped for.

It's the evidence of the things we haven't yet seen. And somehow Joseph in the Old Testament was able to hold on to the Word of God and pass the tests. What are some of the ways that the Word of God tested Joseph? Let's look in Genesis chapter 37, reading from verse 5. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren, and they hated him yet the more.

And he said unto them, Here I pray you this dream which I have dreamed. For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright. And behold, your sheaves stood round about and made obeisance to my sheaf.

And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream and told his brethren and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more. And behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

And he told it to his father and to his brethren. And his father rebuked him and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him, but his father observed the saying. I'd like to suggest to you that possibly because, not possibly, probably because God knew that Joseph was going to go through a very low period in his life, God gave him these dreams.

It seems a little strange. I mean, it seems strange that God would give him a dream in which all of his family would bow before him. It seems a little strange if you imagine a young man telling those dreams.

I think most of us who are parents have sat at the breakfast table and listened to some pretty strange dreams in our lives. And I think if one of our children was to share a dream like this, I hope we wouldn't be too hard on them. And I hope the children, the siblings wouldn't be too jealous.

But it would seem like a sort of bizarre dream. Wow, what were you thinking about when you went to sleep, Joseph? How could you possibly have had such a crazy dream? But I believe that God gave Joseph these dreams. God gave Joseph these promises.

God gave Joseph these glimpses of a glorious future so that he would have something to hold on to through the dark nights that he was about to go through. But I don't think it's enough to just say that. I believe that it's not just that God gave Joseph these wonderful, fantastic dreams of the glory that would one day be revealed in his life.

I think that Joseph had to hold on to those dreams and visions and remain in faith towards that future in order for it to be actualized in his life. He at least has a role to play in moving towards the promises of God in his life. Let me just repeat that.

Joseph at least has a role to play in holding on to the promises of God by faith until they're actualized in his life. Can we agree with that? So the word of the Lord tried Joseph. Joseph was tried.

He was tested. He was put on trial by the advanced knowledge of these wonderful promises of God in his life while his everyday reality was absolutely the opposite. Now, I think all of us would be happy to be surprised one day by God doing something really extraordinary in our lives and just kind of sweeping us off our feet by some grand fulfillment of something that we never anticipated.

But that's not what happened in Joseph's life. Yes, Joseph had this amazing turnaround from prison to prime minister, but through all of those challenges he was holding on to the word of God. What are some of the ways that he was tested? He was tested by the stunning scope of the vision.

I don't think that Joseph was just five years old rambling about his dreams when he told this story. He had to realize that this is a really bizarre story. This dream that I'm about to share is really strange.

So he was tested even to be willing to share it. I wonder if there are any promises of God in our lives, any hope for the future that God has put in your heart. Any faith for a reality in your life or in your family's life which you're not seeing right now that we're not even ready to share because it's so far-fetched from the reality we're living in right now.

So that's at least the first of the tests that Joseph faced. He actually told his father and his brothers, this is the dream I've had. This is the future that my dreams are predicting.

So he was tested by this just astounding scope of the vision that God had given to him. He was tested by his brothers. And I'm not sure that we should be too hard on the brothers here at first.

Obviously later on they became absolutely vindictive and murderous in their intentions. But at least here at the beginning I think most of us would have said something similar to a sibling who told us one day you will all bow on the ground in front of me. I think most of us would have said, oh really? And why would that be? And who are you? Don't we have age order in this family? I think you're out of your pecking order.

So he had brothers who immediately began to mock him and to mock his vision. Like oh really Joseph? You really think that's how it's going to be? And the Bible says they despised him. Joseph was tested by brothers who mocked him.

You know if the outside world mocks the visions and dreams and promises of God that we're holding on to? We kind of expect that. But if family members mock it, that hurts. I wonder if there's anyone here today that is holding on to a vision of God for your future and it's being mocked by people who are very close to you.

David was tested by the word of the Lord. He was also tested by a father who doubted him. Now it seems obvious that his father's position was not where the the brothers were.

But he at least says, you know Joseph this is pretty strange. You know are you really sure this is what you're dreaming? Are you really sure that the significance is your mother and I are going to be bowing before you someday? So he was tested by a father who doubted him. He wasn't sure about this dream.

Moving on. Still in chapter 37 verse 19. Joseph was tested by life situations that appeared to mock his vision.

Appeared. Joseph was tested by life situations that appeared to mock his vision. Now I do not believe the life situations that Joseph was passing through were a mistake.

I do not believe that they were mocking the future. I believe they were part of God's plan to prepare Joseph for that future. I also believe that they were part of God's plan to get an amazing amount of glory by the extraordinary you know prison to prime minister story of Joseph's life.

But the life situations that Joseph faced they appeared to mock. Verse 19 chapter 37 and verse 19. Come now therefore and let us slay him and cast him into some pit and we will say some evil beast hath devoured him and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

You could preach an entire message on that. Don't go up against the promises of God in somebody's life. We will see what will become of his dreams.

Would have been nice to replay that video when they were all bowing in front of Joseph in Egypt down the road. Yeah let's just see what becomes of his dreams. Also moving down to verse 36.

And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar an officer of pharaohs and a captain of the guard. We could go on for a long time about the situation that Joseph found himself in. Can you imagine what was going on in his mind as he shuffled his way down to Egypt behind some Midianite slave traders? Can you imagine what was going on in his mind? My brothers sold me.

I thought they were going to kill me so I guess I'm glad to be alive but my brothers sold me. My own family members sold me into slavery and now I'm on my way into a strange land as a slave with no rights. Joseph was tested by life situations that appeared to mock his vision.

Now we know that the hand of the Lord was on Joseph's life and as he was a slave he immediately started rising up through the ranks of the the workers in the house of Potiphar and he quickly became a respected and honored slave and respected and honored servant. And it might have begun to appear in Joseph's life like well you know it's going to take a while but I'm moving in the right direction. I'm moving my way up the

ladder.

But we all know that that was not the end of the suffering that Joseph was going to go through. Joseph was surrounded for many days for years. Joseph was surrounded by life situations that every single day mocked the promises of God in his life.

Do you have any life situation around you that appears to mock the promises of God in your life? I think if we're honest we all do. We all have things around our lives that seem to make God's word look like an impossibility. That seem to make the the basic promises of God's word seem impossible in our lives.

That seem to make the specific promises or vision that God has given to us for our lives seem to be impossible. Joseph had actual brothers who said to him and let's see what becomes of his dreams. But maybe you don't have family members who say that.

Maybe you have life situations around you. Maybe you have um you're in your own life in your own spiritual life in your own physical life you you feel like you hear life shouting at you and let's see what becomes of those dreams. The word of the Lord tested.

The word of the Lord tried Joseph. Somehow through the the prison sorry the slavery shuffling behind the camels going down to Egypt somehow being a servant in Potiphar's house and somehow living with leg irons around his ankles in a Egyptian prison somehow Joseph held on to the word of God. Somehow Joseph held on to the promises of God.

Somehow Joseph continued to believe that that which had been promised to him was going to be fulfilled. The word of the Lord tried Joseph. That's not the only testing.

Move to Genesis chapter 39. We know that Joseph starts moving up. He's now the honored servant.

He's you know that that's hard for us to imagine but back in those days when slavery was common there were slaves who eventually rose to quite honored positions. Now they were absolutely still slaves but they rose to honored positions in wealthy households and that was Joseph's position and it's like well you know I'm still a stranger in Egypt and I'm still lonely and I'm away from my family but I'm now an honored servant in Potiphar's house. But you and I know that other testings were to come.

Joseph was tested by temptations which could have derailed his future. In Genesis chapter 39 we're reading from verse 7 and it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph and she said lie with me but he refused and said unto his master's wife behold my master what if not what is with me in the house and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand there is none greater in this house than I neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee because thou art his wife how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God and it came to pass as she spake to Joseph day by day that he hearkened not unto her to lie by her to be with her and it came to pass about this time that Joseph went into the house to do his business and there was none of the men of the house there within and she caught him by his garment saying lie with me and he left his garment in her hand and fled and got him out. Joseph was tested by temptations which could have derailed his future.

I think we understand the principles of God's word enough to know that had Joseph decided look this is about as good as my life is going to be I'm already stuck in slavery I'm already locked in this house but now this you know this wealthy man's wife is interested in me and I'm a slave and I kind of got to get what I can get and this is probably as high as I'm ever going to rise in my life. If Joseph would have given in at

that moment in his life I think we understand the principles of of God's word enough that the fulfillment of God's promises in Joseph's life would have likely been cut off or truncated so Joseph was tempted by or was tried by a temptation which could have just derailed him he couldn't really leave he was a slave and so there he is stuck in this house stuck in this situation where day by day he's facing the temptation of this woman the word of the Lord tried Joseph so maybe for some of you today it's more pertinent to speak of temptations maybe you don't have siblings that mock God's promises in your life maybe you don't have family members or a life situation that right now seems to mock the things that God has promised for you in your future but maybe you're tempted by the world around you and maybe the world around you is tempting you to walk away from the fulfillment of the promises of God in your life the promises of God are yea and amen in our lives in Jesus name they are they're promised they're sure however it's not that we can't walk away it's not that you and I can't give into temptation and walk away from the promises of God that he's made over our lives and so the word of the Lord tried Joseph yes it tried him in prison it also tried him in in Potiphar's house when a quote good opportunity seems to be opening but Joseph had the insight to recognize that this quote good opportunity was not the fulfillment of what God had promised him you know it's it's Satan's way to try to bring to us a shortcut for something that God is already planning to do in our lives let me repeat that it's Satan's way to bring us a temptation which is a shortcut to achieving or getting or enjoying or receiving something which God is already planning to fulfill or give us in our lives when Satan was tempting Jesus and making all those offers of a deal to Jesus Satan is offering Jesus things that are already his he's offering Satan things that I'm sorry Satan is offering Jesus things which were already his he was already going to be the master of the whole earth he was already going to be the one before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord and so in in your life maybe holding on to the promises of God and being tried by the promises of God means being firm against temptations which could cut off the promises of God in my life Joseph was tested by temptations that could have derailed his future then you know what it's not that he said no to temptation and God immediately poured a special blessing on him it would be a little bit easier to say no to temptation if I say no today and tomorrow God just jumps a special blessing on my life and it's like yes you know like a mom who tells her child don't don't take a piece of candy and mom goes out of the kitchen and the child is in the in the kitchen with the candy and then when mom walks in and realizes my child didn't eat the candy then mom gives a piece of candy to the child you know that's that's positive you're okay you didn't eat it now I'm going to give it to you but that's not what happened in Joseph's life Joseph rather because of refusing that temptation rather went lower I know that we know the story continuing in Genesis chapter 39 and it came to pass when his master heard the words of his wife which she spake unto him saying after that after this manner did thy servant to me that his wrath was kindled and Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison a place where the king's prisoners were bound and he was there in the prison imagine what was going through Joseph's mind as he cooled his heels there in the dungeon okay Lord I thought I was kind of moving up it was starting to look good at least I'm the master of the servants in a fairly wealthy house in an influential family in Egypt and God I thought I did the right thing I said no to the temptation I ran like a godly man should run and now I'm in prison we're not making much headway here I remember this feeling of cold feet it was when I was thrown into that dry well years ago and I was starting to climb my way up now I'm all the way back down you remember chutes and ladders children you play chutes and ladders you get up there to 98 and then you hit that that must have been how it felt in Joseph's life you still play that game is that game still played I'm almost to win all the way back down to number two or three or four again Joseph's thinking I'm rising in this world I'm starting to make it maybe he was thinking oh here comes the fulfillment of God's promises say no to temptation and not a pat on the head no all the way back down now I'm in a dungeon again the word of the Lord tested Joseph now we don't have a lot of

places where we can see Joseph saying I still hold on to the promises of God but the story of Joseph's life affirms to us that in all of these difficult situations he was facing he was still holding on to God's promises for him he was still holding on to the vision that God had given him he was still holding on to the dreams the word of the Lord tried Joseph he was tested by unfair treatment due to lies against him he was tested by loneliness and separation can you imagine how lonely it must have been to be thrown into that prison he's already separated from his family he started to make his way in among the servants in Potiphar's house there in Egypt now he's thrown into prison can you imagine the kind of loneliness that must have just rolled over him maybe you're here today and and you're not facing a particular temptation to an active sin maybe you don't feel like you're surrounded by people or circumstances that really mock God's promises in your life but maybe you just face a dark veil of loneliness Joseph faced that and he still held on the word of the Lord tried Joseph just a little phrase but what a light this sheds on all of Joseph's life as we look back through it and remember that through all of these difficult terrible life circumstances that Joseph is facing he's holding on to a promise that looks so fanciful so beyond comprehension from the everyday life situation that he's living with Joseph was tested by the passing years it says that Potiphar's wife came after him day after day his prison experience lasted years maybe you've been holding on to faith maybe you went into a difficult life situation some time ago and you've been holding on to faith for a whole year you know it's it's a it's hard to hold on in faith for a year you know if somebody asked you to do a chin up and then just hold it it's amazing how long a minute is if you're doing a chin up maybe you've held on in faith for a year but maybe God's promise is not going to be fulfilled in a year maybe it's going to be years do you have anything like that in your life I do it might be years Joseph was tested by the passing years it wasn't a sprint of faith that Joseph was called to he was called to a marathon he was called to a cross-country marathon he was called to hold on in faith as the years went by and that family that was supposed to bow to him was now just a distant memory he was tested by the passing years look over to Genesis chapter 41 Joseph was tested by a sudden rise to power you know there are people who can pass the test of suffering and then can't pass the opposite test they say if you really want to know the moral character or fiber of a man or a woman let that person suddenly come into wealth or suddenly come into power and see who they really are maybe that's not a humble person maybe they're just too poor to be proud but suddenly thrust that person into a position of wealth and influence and then check their character Joseph was now tested on the total opposite side the word of the Lord is still trying Joseph but now it's trying him on the opposite side we're in Genesis chapter 41 and verse 14 again I'm just supposing that we all know the story of the dreams and the baker and the butler now Joseph is called verse 14 then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon and he shaved himself and changed his raiment and came in unto Pharaoh what a change I find myself kind of a little discombobulated by flying from Africa to America in just a day it's like such a shocking change but here's a man who's been living in prison and suddenly a messenger comes and says the king wants to see you and kings don't wait come on come on come on it's like I gotta shave I need to look presentable I'm going in front of the king and then Pharaoh begins to tell him the dreams jump forward to the end of Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's dreams jump forward to verse 39 and Pharaoh said unto Joseph for as much as God has showed thee all this there is none so discreet and wise as thou art thou shalt be over my house and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled that only in the throne will I be greater than thou and Pharaoh said unto Joseph see I have set thee over all the land of Egypt and Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had and they cried before him bow the knee and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt the word of the Lord tried Joseph he's now tested by a sudden rise to power but before we jump to the the rise in power let's just recognize that

Joseph was ready of course he was ready to have a bath and put on some nice clothes but that's not the ready I'm speaking about Joseph was ready in heart being able to interpret the dreams being able to tell Pharaoh this is the message of God to you Pharaoh that required a readiness of heart and by readiness of heart I'm referring to activity of heart a an active heart of faith Joseph was still in connection with God the word of the Lord tried Joseph and even though he was in prison he was staying at a place of faith and a place of trust in God and a place of relating to God that when the the messenger came and said it's time for you to come up and interpret dreams and tell King Pharaoh what message God is trying to give him Joseph didn't say I need a week I'm not ready I've actually been doubting God I'm really not ready to interpret dreams right now I I'm not really on good terms with dreams from God right now you know this is what God has been saying to me God's been saying Daniel some of the dreams and visions that you have that are not being fulfilled right now they're going to take a while to come but when they come will you still be in faith I know I'm applying this this verse I realize that this is not exactly the interpretation but when Jesus returns will we find faith on this earth what about when the sun comes up again in my life or your life will we be there in faith when the messenger comes and says Pharaoh wants to see you the Pharaoh yes the Pharaoh will I be ready still holding on to the word of God or or will I be playing catch-up because I've lost my faith in dreams and my ability to interpret those dreams I'm no longer holding on to the word of God I failed the test of holding on to the promises of God what about in your life when God turns again the captivity when God begins to fulfill that promise that you've been holding on to for a long time physical healing spiritual healing a miracle in your family a turnaround in your life situation will you be ready to basically just need 10 minutes to shower and shave and you're ready to walk into the fulfillment of what God had always planned for you I personally feel there's a great danger that God is will be ready to fulfill his promises and I won't still be in faith so that's the challenge I'm trying to leave with us this morning tested by the passing years but still in faith and ready still connected to God still connected to his word still believing that God fulfills his promises and ready to take a bath and go stand in front of Pharaoh he was tested by this sudden rise to power wow okay first order of business I'd like to see Potiphar's wife and a few other people that I have a score to settle with it's a terrifying thing we just had a coup um three countries to the north and west of Ghana last week and when there's a coup that's terrifying what they were witnessing in Afghanistan that's terrifying because suddenly this person is in power and they have a list and the Taliban has a list and that new military uh ruler in the country of Guinea he has a list he has people he's got scores to settle against a whole bunch of people in his life and yet that's not what you always see in Joseph's life he was tested by that sudden rise to power lastly he was tested by a chance to hold bitterness in his heart and finally pay back let's turn to Genesis chapter 45 again I know we're familiar with this story but now the brothers have come and they've come and gone and come again and and Joseph finally gets to a place where he's overwhelmed by the fulfillment of that promise you imagine what that was like for Joseph as he sat there on his throne as the prime minister of Egypt and all of his brothers are there bowing in front of him and suddenly it's like oh I saw this before God promised this before I knew this was coming God gave me that promise all those years ago and I've held on to that promise and today it's being fulfilled and he's able to hide his emotions and run out a time or two but finally he decides he's going to square with his brothers chapter 45 and verse 4 and Joseph said unto his brethren come near to me I pray you and they came near and he said I am Joseph your brother whom ye sold into Egypt now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither for God did send me before you to preserve life and these two years hath the famine been in the land and yet there are five years in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest and God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance so now it was not you that sent me hither but God and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh and the Lord of all his house and a ruler throughout all the land

of Egypt does that sound like a bitter man I know we know the story but how stunning how stunning not a barb I mean I think even as a spiritual man I would have liked to say do you remember what you said do you mind if I quote you senior brother let's see what will become of his dreams yeah yeah let's let's see do you want to look around do you see other people bowing beside you do you see who you're bowing to just give me just a minute here to kind of glory in this in sort of a bitter way no hey brothers come closer it really wasn't you who sent me here God sent me here to preserve your lives and there are other interactions in which he says don't fear I'm not planning something against you because the brothers were terrified like wow we never imagined this kind of a turnaround how are we even going to sleep at night surely he's going to take us take us on surely he's going to deal with us Joseph was tested by a chance at holding bitterness in his heart and then the resulting payback when he finally came out on top maybe the word of the Lord is testing you today maybe from the promises that we read and many others that we know are in the word of God promises for your future and it it doesn't seem like you're living in those promises it doesn't seem like your family is moving in the direction of those promises maybe there's some physical or spiritual thing in your personal life that seems like it's just mocking the promises of God in his word it's like God that's that's not me I'm not there I'm not seeing that maybe in your family you're holding on to a promise of God to see something fulfilled that right now seems very far away the word of the Lord tried Joseph and I'm suggesting to you that the word of the Lord is testing and trying you and I and that God wants us to take hold of his promises and hold on to them when family mocks us when our brothers don't don't don't believe in our dreams when my life situation seems to scream at me that those promises are not real when I'm tested by temptation when I'm tested by loneliness when I'm tested by the years going by I'm still able to hold on to the word of God and say I know whom I have believed and I'm persuaded that he is able and he is going to fulfill the things which he has promised in my life God I believe that you are going to perfect the things which concern me God I believe that you are going to fulfill your promises in my life Lord my reality right now does not seem to fit with what I see in your word but I'm going to continue holding on to your word believing that you will present me before your throne with exceeding joy I'm going to hold on to that and by holding on to those promises our lives are sanctified by those promises our lives are kept in a position of faith by holding on to those promises and our hearts are kept in a place of readiness so that when they come and say pharaoh wants to see you we're able to jump into the next stage of life we're able to jump into the next blessing that God is planning for us we're we're able to move into that new ministry we're able to move into that new victory that God is promising in our lives we're able to move into that restored relationship which now is broken rather than needing a week to recover needing some time to fast and repent and pray and I have felt God say into my heart many times in the last couple of years Daniel the sun is going to rise again will you still be standing here in faith when it does and I want to challenge all of our hearts by this concept from Joseph's life God was trying him God was testing him holding on to those promises of God was not an easy thing in his life but he held on to them and we all know that they were fulfilled and I believe that the promises of God in your life will equally be fulfilled but you and I are right now some of us more than others for sure but all of us to some degree are right now in that period where the word of God is trying us testing us will we hold on will we believe will we continue to hold on to what God has promised us or we set it aside casting not away your confidence which has a sure recompense of reward might have been easier somewhere along the line in Joseph's life to just say you know what forget all of that I just gotta live and let live I gotta just get what I can get I'm gonna have to scrap and live the best I can because I don't know what on earth those dreams were and we too may be tempted sometimes to walk away from the promises of God but Joseph held on and I want to encourage us to hold on the word of the Lord tried Joseph let's bow our heads father this morning we just want to give a unified corporate we believe you we want to say from our hearts we believe you Lord

we raise up our hearts we raise up our hands to you and we say Lord the promises which you have given to me are yea and amen in Christ father we say to you this morning that we believe that you are able more than able to perfect everything which concerns our life Lord we give you a word back to you this morning we believe that you are able to keep us against that day we believe that you are able to hold us and continue conforming us into the image of Christ until that day when we will be face to face father we believe in the promise of a future resurrection and we hold on to that promise even while our life situation or our bodies seem to die or decay father all together this morning we affirm to you Lord that we believe in you father I pray that you will give grace to your people this week as your word tests them as life seems to hit us and sometimes almost knock us silly knock us off of the promises of God that we're standing on father may your people take a fresh courage from the example of Joseph and hold on to your promises so that we're ready Lord when you fulfill them thank you for your word this morning Lord we love your word and we love you thank you in Jesus name God bless you all thank you

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