

When Others Keep Setting You Back

How God Turns Setbacks into Comebacks – Part 7

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GENESIS 37-50

Much of Joseph's life included a series of painful *setbacks* from his dream to do great things with his life. But God used them to position Joseph for a spectacular comeback that saved 2 entire nations: Israel & Egypt

1st SETBACK: GROWING UP IN A HOME WHERE HE WAS

“Now Jacob loved Joseph more than all of his other children because Joseph had been born in Jacob's old age. So, one day Jacob gave Joseph a special ornamented robe. When Joseph's brothers saw that their father loved him more than he loved them, they hated Joseph, and they would not even speak to him or acknowledge him. And when Joseph told his 11 brothers about a great dream from God, they hated him even more!” Genesis 37:3-5

2nd SETBACK:

“One day, when Joseph's brothers were out in the fields, they saw Joseph coming toward from a distance and they made plans to kill him. ‘Here comes that dreamer!’ they exclaimed. ‘Come on, let's kill him and throw him into a deep pit. We can tell our father that a wild animal attacked and ate him. Then we'll see what becomes of all his great dreams!” Genesis 37:18-20

“Then Reuben said, ‘Let's not kill him, Let's just throw him into this pit in the wilderness. That way we won't shed any blood.’ He said this, secretly planning to save Joseph and send him back to his father. So, when Joseph arrived, his brothers stripped him of his favorite robe and then tossed him into the pit which was a dry well, without any water in it.” Genesis 37:21-24

3rd SETBACK:

“After they threw Joseph into the pit, the brothers sat down to eat dinner. But then they saw a caravan of traders passing by, headed to Egypt, with camels that were loaded down with spices, balm and myrrh. Then Judah said to his brothers, ‘We won't gain anything if we just let our brother die in this pit, and we'll all share in a murder cover-up. So why don't we do this: Let's sell off our brother to these traders! All the brothers thought that was a good idea. So, they sold Joseph for 20 shekels to the traders who took him to Egypt.” Genesis 37:26-28

4th SETBACK:

“Then the brothers took Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. Then they took the robe back to their father and said, ‘We found this coat. Does it belong to your son?’ Jacob recognized it and cried out, ‘Yes! Some wild animal must have killed Joseph and torn him to pieces! . . . Then Jacob sobbed for a long time. Everyone tried to comfort him but he said, ‘I'll grieve this loss until the day I die.’” Genesis 37:31-35

5th SETBACK:

“Meanwhile, in Egypt, the traders sold Joseph to be a slave of Potiphar, a man who was an officer of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.” Genesis 37:36

6th SETBACK:

“Now Joseph was well-built and very handsome. After a while his master's wife took notice and began to lust for him. She begged, ‘Come to bed with me!’ But Joseph refused saying, ‘. . . How could I do such an evil thing and sin against God and my master?’ And though she tempted Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be alone with her. But one day, when Joseph was working inside the house, none of the household servants were inside. So Potiphar's wife came up behind him and grabbed Joseph by his tunic demanding ‘Sleep with me right now!’ But Joseph resisted. He wriggled out of his tunic and ran outside.

When she saw that she still had his tunic in her hands, she made up this story for the other servants: ‘Look! The Hebrew slave tried to assault me but I screamed, so he ran out of the house, but he left his tunic here!’ When her husband came home, she gave him the same story. Potiphar burned with anger when he heard his wife's accusations. He arrested Joseph on the spot and dragged him off and threw him in the king's prison.” Genesis 39:6b-19

7th SETBACK:

Story of Pharaoh's Wine Steward & Baker; Genesis 40:1-23

“Joseph said to the king's wine steward, ‘When you are freed from prison and restored to your position with Pharaoh, please show me kindness and remember to mention me to the king so I too can get out of this prison. I was forcibly kidnapped from my homeland and now I'm stuck in this prison even though I've done nothing to deserve this . . . But the wine steward never gave Joseph another thought – he forgot all about him.” Genesis 40:14-15, 23

WHAT MADE JOSEPH SO RESILIENT?

1. _____
In the Pit
“Jacob’s sons became jealous of their brother Joseph and they sold him to be a slave in Egypt. But THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH and brought him SAFELY THROUGH all his troubles.” Acts 7:9

“Now when the slave traders arrived in Egypt, they sold Joseph to a man named Potiphar, who was one of Pharaoh’s officials and captain of the palace guard. THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH, so he became a successful man. He lived and served in the home of his Egyptian master.” Genesis 39:1-2

At Potiphar’s
“Potiphar realized that THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH, and that the Lord was making him successful in everything he did. So, Potiphar was very happy with Joseph’s work and he hired him to be his personal aide. He put Joseph in charge of everything in his home and trusting him with everything he owned. Then God blessed everyone working in Potiphar’s household because of Joseph, and God blessed everything that belonged to Potiphar too . . .” Genesis 39:3-5

In Prison
“Joseph was thrown into the prison where all the king’s prisoners were held. But even there, the Lord was with Joseph, and God caused the prison warden to like Joseph. Before long, the jailer put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison!” Genesis 39:20-22

“The jailer did not have to worry about anything for which Joseph was responsible, because THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH and whatever he did, was blessed. God made him succeed in everything he did.” Genesis 39:23

2. _____
“Joseph said to them, ‘Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.’” Genesis 50:19-20

3. _____
“The king said to him, ‘I have had a dream, and no one can explain it. I have been told that you can interpret dreams.’ Joseph answered the king, ‘I am not able to do this, but God can! I can’t explain the meaning of dreams, but God will do this for the king.’” Genesis 41:15-16

“As they discussed who should be appointed for the job, Pharaoh said, ‘Who could do it better than Joseph? For he is a man who is obviously filled with the spirit of God.’ The king said to Joseph, “It is obvious that you have greater wisdom and insight than anyone else. So, I am putting you in charge of my country, and all my people will obey your orders. Your authority will be second only to mine. I now appoint you governor over all Egypt.’ The king removed from his finger the ring engraved with the royal seal and put it on Joseph’s finger. He put a fine linen robe on him, and placed a gold chain around his neck . . . And the king said to him, “I am the king, and I say that no one in all Egypt shall so much as lift a hand or a foot without your permission.” Genesis 41:39-44