



The Good News

December 30th, 2018

Volume 18, Issue 52

Revive Us Again

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We often face some days with dread, having been sapped of our strength from the previous days' responsibilities. It's easy to point out to ourselves or others the issues we face that present challenges to us, and often we find ourselves wishing circumstances were different than they are. The story of Joseph and the events that occurred in his life (Genesis 37 ff) are particularly educational to us as Christians because, despite his godliness, fear, respect, and love of God, bad things kept happening to him. But the Bible doesn't just focus on the unfortunate circumstances that befell Joseph, as we are also told that he was made to prosper *because God was with him* and *because he loved and feared God*.

It's doubtful that we will ever find ourselves in such drastic predicaments as Joseph did, but we often face our own issues while needing just as much spiritual energy, commitment, and determination as we see in Joseph—or Noah, or Isaiah, or Job, or so many other examples we are given to show us how we should approach our own lives. But how often do we see our problems and difficulties as opportunities? Joseph made this clear by his approach to his own life's difficulties. He relied upon God, and only God. His faith in God was his strength. It gave him the ability to face whatever came his way, whether it was a lustful married woman, his jealous brothers, the loneliness and sorrow he surely dealt with from being separated from his father and youngest brother, and who knows how many other "little" problems he faced that aren't recorded. He then used the circumstances, no matter how bad they were, as an opportunity to serve God and show everyone how a God-fearing person conducts themselves in this world. The opportunities that we have are no different: we have a chance to teach the world how God's faithful people deal with life. The specifics of the problems are immaterial—what mat-

ters is that we can teach others by simply trusting God and overcoming our own problems through Him.

All of this is easier said than done, right? Absolutely. In order to put this into practice, one must have a spirit of belief, hope, and optimism, knowing that God will always be there to help us deal with the obstacles in our path. To hold fast to that belief and to possess that kind of hope requires us to do certain things. The most obvious is to educate ourselves in God's ways and His will for us. Additionally, we need to spiritually revive ourselves every day. To do this, we must remind ourselves of the big picture God has planned, we must refresh our knowledge of what God wants us to do to prepare for the conclusion of His plan (Judgment Day), and we must renew our energy through the hope that God gives us. Ultimately, we need to remember what our purpose is on this earth. Romans 12:2 gives us a very concise description for our lives here: to transform ourselves by the renewing of our minds in His word, to avoid conformity with the world, and to show that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God in our lives. It speaks of renewing our minds, thereby renewing our strength and our efforts to see His will done in our lives. Indeed, our trials and difficulties are *opportunities* to show the world just how strong, how perfect, and how good God's love and God's will truly are. We should always view our lives, and the circumstances we face, with this opportunistic point of view, reminding ourselves that God can revive us again over and over every day...will we let Him?