

BETTER than EVER

January 10, 2021
“Responding
to a Crisis”

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for preserving this ancient story that is so relevant for us today. Thank you for using our responses to difficult circumstances to accomplish your intentions. But Lord, you know that our response that has the potential to reverse the natural course of things, isn't natural. So, would you give us the wisdom to know what to do in difficult circumstances and then give us the courage to do it. We pray this in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

Genesis 39:1-20 (NIV)

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

² The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. ³ When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, ⁴ Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. ⁵ From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. ⁶ So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph's care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, ⁷ and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

⁸ But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. ⁹ No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld

nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" ¹⁰ And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

¹¹ One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. ¹² She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

¹³ When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, ¹⁴ she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. ¹⁵ When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

¹⁶ She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. ¹⁸ But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

¹⁹ When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger. ²⁰ Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined.

INTRODUCTION

While we don't always choose our circumstances, we do have the ability to choose our responses. But the response that has the potential to reverse the natural course of things isn't natural at all. Never underestimate the power of a measured response. We have no idea what hangs in the balance of our decision to respond rather than react to events we did not choose. Our responses can make us better.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Are you ready for things to get back to normal? When do you think that may happen?
- 2) What are you learning through this season and what do you want to carry forward?
- 3) Did you grow up assuming if God was with you, things would go well for you? Or something similar?
- 4) Who do you respect most? Why? Does it have anything to do with their response to adversity? If so, what would their story be if they had reacted as expected?
- 5) Read Genesis 39 on page 1.
 - What stands out to you about this passage?
 - What circumstances happened to Joseph that were out of his control?
 - What are some of the natural responses Joseph could have had to those circumstances?

FINAL APPLICATION

Is there anything you would do (or would have done) differently if you were confident God was with you? Is there an area where you are reacting as expected rather than exercising your "respond-ability"?