

THE PURPOSE OF TESTING #6

Training for Reigning

Part 2

I. Introduction

A. A Startling Statement

1. Let me begin with what may seem like a startling statement: It may surprise you to learn that...

**God has more in mind than just getting us to heaven;
He is preparing us to rule and reign with Christ!**

2. Somehow we have become disconnected from one of the most extraordinary teachings of the New Testament; that born again believers will actually become joint heirs to the Throne of Jesus Christ.

3. In this message I want to do 3 things:

- 1st: Prove the point that God has the Christian life is “training for reigning”
- 2nd: Point out the pathway, as modeled by Joseph and Jesus
- 3rd: Show how all this applies personally to you and me: That God has a great purpose for every testing and trial that He allows to come into our lives.

II. Training for Reigning

A. First: Prove the Point That We are “Training for Reigning”

1. The first hint of this is seen in something Jesus said to His Disciples:

Matthew 19:28

So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, *you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

a. Taking this verse alone, you might think Jesus is *limiting* the promise to just the original disciples; but that would be a mistake.

2. In Romans 5, the Apostle Paul includes ALL believers as those who will reign with Christ:

Romans 5:17

For if by one man's offence (Adam) death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness *shall reign in life* by one, Jesus Christ.

3. In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul is rebuking believers for taking one another into the civil courts instead of judging disputes within the church:

1 Corinthians 6:2-3

Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

4. In his last letter, Paul wrote this to his spiritual son Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:11-12

This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also *reign* with Him.

5. The Book of Revelation has several references to how the saints will reign with Christ; we will read 3...

Revelation 3:21

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

a. Life is not about what we are undergoing; it is about what we are overcoming!

b. Overcoming, by definition, implies that there is a problem or an obstacle in the way. More on that in a moment.

Revelation 5:8-10

Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; *And we shall reign on the earth.*"

c. One more text: There is much debate about the Book of Revelation; but how it ends up is quite clear-the saints will reign with Christ!

Revelation 22:3-5

And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

6. And make no mistake of what it means to “reign”!

Thayer’s Greek Lexicon

“basileuo”

To be king, to exercise kingly power, to reign: universally, of the reign of Christians in the millennium, Rev 5:10; 20:4,6; 22:5; hence, Paul transfers the word to denote the supreme moral dignity, liberty, blessedness, which will be enjoyed by Christ's redeemed ones: Rom 5:17 Metaphorically, to exercise the highest influence, to control: Rom 5:14,17,21; 6:12.

The officer or minister of a prince, a courtier: John 4:46, 49

a. A related Greek word means “reign together with”:

Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words

“sunbasileuo”

"to reign together with"; it is used of the future "reign" of believers together and with Christ in the kingdom of God in manifestation,

7. So the 1st point is proven: whether we know it or not, the Christian life on earth is a “training for reigning”!

8. Now we move to the 2nd point; we will look at the model in the lives of 2 men; Joseph in the OT and Jesus in the NT.

B. Two Examples of Training for Reigning: Joseph and Jesus

1. God has given us a model of what “training for reigning” looks like; Joseph in the Old Testament, Jesus in the New Testament.

2. We study the stories of Joseph in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament together because they are so strikingly similar; so much so that Bible scholars consider Joseph one of the most dramatic “types” of Christ in the Old Testament.

“Type”

A historical event, person, or object that in some ways symbolized or anticipates a later occurrence or fulfillment; an Old Testament “foreshadowing” of a New Testament person, event, or spiritual truth.
The Concise Dictionary of Theology

3. A.W. Pink finds over 100 details in the life of Jesus that are dramatically fulfilled in the life of Christ! **Here are 13:**

TYPE/ANTITYPE	JOSEPH	JESUS
Both had a Dream of Future Exaltation	Genesis 37:3-11	Matthew 26:64
His father’s favorite son	Gen 37:4	Matthew 3:17
Hated by his brethren	Gen 37:4	John 7:7
Envied by his brethren	Gen 37:11	Matthew 27:18
Betrayed by his brethren	Gen 37:18	John 13:2
Sold for Silver	Gen 37:28	Matthew 26:15-16
Stripped of his raiment	Gen 37:23	Matthew 27:27-28
Thrown in a pit	Gen 37:24	Matthew 12:40
Falsely accused	Gen 39:17-18	Mark 14:57
Refused to defend self	Gen 39	Mark 14:61
Raised from a Pit	Gen 41:14	John 21:14
Promoted to Reign	Gen 45:9	Acts 2:36
Saved the World	From famine Gen 41:57	From sin Mt 1:21

	Gen 41:57	Matthew 1:21
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Samuel Eyles Pierce

(English theologian, 1746-1829)

“In many circumstances concerning Joseph — in his being beloved of his father — in his being hated of his brethren — in his sufferings and deep abasement — in his being brought out of prison — in his advancement and exaltation — in his wisdom and prudence — in his providing for his father's family — in his free forgiveness of the injuries he had sustained from his brethren — it may be truly said, we have Christ set forth, in type, figure, and representatively.”

4. Notice that all the problems begin with a Promise or a Dream.
 - a. God gave Joseph the promise of promotion in 2 dreams.
 - b. God gave Jesus the promise He would be promoted to sit at the right hand of God judging the nations.
5. In both cases the Promise itself produced a problem!

Genesis 37:19-20

Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming! Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall see what will become of his dreams! “

- a. The same spirit is seen in how the Jews mocked Jesus on the Cross:

Luke 23:34-35

And they divided His garments and cast lots. And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God."

- b. Remember that the same God who gave a dream to Joseph and a promise to Jesus works the same for us; as noted by one of the Puritan fathers...

Treasury of David

Many promises of the Lord come to us, as they came to Joseph, like dream visions of the future. Visions come to the Christian soul, as grand and wonderful as those which came to the Hebrew youth of old; and they, too, are

**prophecies of what we are destined to be. God's promises must try every man.
But there comes a time when the great inheritance will be revealed.**

6. The lives of Joseph and Jesus teach us that the problem is part and parcel with the promise; God is as much at work in the problem as He was in giving the promise.

Sermons Preached at King's Lynn

“God makes the Trial of the Promise fulfil the Promise itself. In Joseph the temptation to doubt the word of God silently fitted him for the fulfilment of the promise. And so it is with us all.”

Edward Zuscombe (1867)

7. One of my favorite Bible teachers said it best:

Bob Mumford

“The promises are meant to be fulfilled. The trouble is, most of us bog down in the problem because we don't understand that the problem is part of God's pattern; the problem is the *means* of obtaining the provision.”

a. Pay attention! “The problem is the *means* of obtaining the provision”!

8. Joseph was 17 years old when God gave him the promise that he would rule and reign in the form of a dream. He gave him the promise but He did not show him the problems he would go through to get there! But it was those very problems that prepared him for the promotion!

Psalm 105:17-19

He (God) sent a man before them — Joseph — who was sold as a slave. They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons. Until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him.

a. The literal Hebrew: “Iron came into his soul”!

Treasury of David

“Until the time that his word came. God has his times, and his children must wait till his ‘until’ is fulfilled. Joseph was tried as in a furnace, until the Lord's refining work was fully accomplished.”

b. God used Joseph's problems to produce the kind of character it would take to sit on the throne!

Samuel Emadi

The Gospel Coalition

“Joseph’s story is the story of the whole Bible. It’s the story of glory through suffering, exaltation through humiliation. It’s the story of the cross and the crown.”

9. Once again we see how Joseph foreshadowed Jesus!

Hebrews 2:10

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

And it was only right that He should make Jesus, through His suffering, a perfect leader, fit to bring them into their salvation. (NLT)

10. Here's a point to ponder:

- God promised Joseph he would reign; but the promise had to be tested through some suffering
- God promised Jesus He would reign; but EVEN WITH JESUS the promise had to be tested through suffering
- Now we have seen how God has promised US that we will reign; isn't it reasonable to assume it will take some suffering to fit us for the throne?

Charles Spurgeon

God's way is the best way. Our Lord's path to his mediatorial Throne ran by the cross of Calvary; our road to glory may run by the rivers of grief.

God has a purpose for every test and trial He allows into our lives.

And much of what we must endure is a training for reigning;
He is working in us the kind of Christ-like character that will require.

III. Close: Personal Applications

A. Five Unavoidable Tests in Training for Reigning

1. Betrayal by someone close to us.

- a. Joseph was betrayed by his own brothers.
- b. Jesus was betrayed by one of His own disciples; Judas fulfilled the Messianic prophecy of...

Psalm 41:9

Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

- c. Your betrayal may come from a spouse; a business partner; a family member; it may even be a spiritual leader; it may happen. It's training for reigning.

2. False accusation.

- a. Joseph was accused of rape by his master's wife (Genesis 39)
- b. Jesus was accused of blasphemy (Matthew 9:3)

3. Isolation/Loneliness

(There are so many great Bible heroes who suffered loneliness and isolation: Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Jeremiah)

- a. Joseph was displaced from his family to live among strangers; later he would languish alone in a prison.
- b. Jesus fulfilled the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah:

Isaiah 63:3

"I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me.

Jeremiah 15:17

I did not sit in the assembly of the mockers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone because of Your hand, for You have filled me with indignation.

- c. Time and again, He went off by Himself alone to pray; in Gethsemane they all fell asleep; and at His trial all of them deserted Him! You may have long seasons of isolation and loneliness; it's training for reigning.

4. Dealing With Divine Detours

a. God gave Joseph the dream at 17; but there were 13 years of “Divine Detours”; a pit, a prison. Joseph took the throne at 30 and reigned 80 years; God called Moses at 80 and he ruled Israel for 30 years!

b. You may be single, waiting on a wife or husband; you may have a vision to start your own business; Patience can be a problem! It’s training for reigning.

c. And the last one I’ll mention is...

5. Total trust in God.

a. It’s one thing to trust God for our salvation; it’s another thing to truly trust Him in all things.

b. We can never come to that place

B. The Character of Joseph is Revealed

1. After he is promoted to the throne, the famine brings Joseph’s brothers to Egypt for food; and when he reveals himself to them, they are afraid.

Genesis 45:4-5

Then Joseph said to his brothers... "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.

Genesis 45:6-8

For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

2. The brothers thought sending Joseph to Egypt was their own doing; but Joseph had a revelation; God had sent Him! There was a purpose behind it all.

Joseph Barnes

“God so ordered it by his providence that a man-Joseph—was sent before the family of Jacob into Egypt, that he might make arrangements for their reception and preservation. The whole matter was as God had sent him even though it was brought about as the result of a series of most wicked acts.”

a. God foreknew Joseph would save the whole family!

Charles Spurgeon

Joseph was the advance guard and pioneer for the whole clan. His brethren sold him, but God sent him. Where the hand of the wicked is visible God's hand may be invisibly at work, overruling their malice.

3. Later, Joseph's brothers still doubted his grace; they were still afraid of him. But...

Genesis 50:19-20

Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

4. Oh, if we could only see what Joseph saw! Think of all who ever hurt us and yet see it as under the gracious hand of God! They "meant it for evil" but "God meant it for good"!

Genesis 50:21

Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

5. And so it is that our Heavenly "Joseph" will deal with us! We do not be afraid. He will provide for us and our little ones!

6. So what have we said?

REVIEW

- **We are training for reigning; God has a purpose for every test He allows in our lives**
 - **Joseph and Jesus are our models**
- **God is truly "working all things together for good"; He is "conforming us to the image of His Son**

**God has more in mind than just getting us to heaven;
He is preparing us to rule and reign with Christ!**

Communion and Prayer

Additional Thought

Like the sons of Zebedee, we are destined to rule and reign with Christ.

But we must not covet the higher place; the pathway is through suffering and service! The degree of authority we will have will ultimately be determined by God and according to what we have done on earth.

Matthew 20:20-28

20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. 21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?"

She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." 22 But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

They said to Him, "We are able." 23 So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." 24 And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."