

Promotions in Disguise

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I know a lot of people right now who are going through what Joseph experienced — a promotion that looks an awful lot like a devastating setback. Remember Joseph? He had God-given dreams, and as soon as he shared them, he was betrayed by his brothers, thrown into a dry well, then sold as a slave. He ended up in Egypt first as a slave and then as a prisoner. When it looked like he was finally about to be given an opportunity to get out of prison, he was forgotten and remained captive two more years.

That's a lot of time to think about how you've been betrayed — by others or even by God. When God has given you dreams and then everything in life goes in the opposite direction, it looks like you completely misunderstood God, that somehow blew the opportunities He gave you, or that He somehow abandoned you. But every step of the way, Joseph was being promoted. Sure, it looked like slavery and imprisonment were steps down the ladder, not up. But in God's kingdom, each test of character and faith is a stepping stone toward the destiny He has designed us for. Joseph's last two years in prison were the ultimate test of his faith. And though he didn't realize it, he was closer to his dreams than ever. What looks like a setback is often the last stage in our preparation for a fulfilled calling.

Remember that if you're going through a hard trial right now. Be encouraged. Pass the tests of character and faith, and see what God does. You could not bear the weight of what God is going to do in your life if He did not refine you in the fires of time and trials. Those who inherit God's promises inherit them by faith and patience (Hebrews 6:12, a verse I mentioned in my last post that seems to keep coming up in my life). Even if you feel like you're confined in your circumstances, hold on. The next step may be the fulfillment of what God has placed in your heart.