

ORIENTATION TO UNDESERVED SUFFERING MINISTRY

Notice how the lesson text opens – “Then It came about after these things” (Gen.40:1). This phrase is important to our lesson subject, **Orientation to Undeserved Suffering (U/S) Ministry**.

This phrase informs us of the sequences of U/S of Joseph’s life in the plan of God (pit, Potiphar, prison).

(1 Pet.4:12) “**Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal** among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you.”

(Phil.1:29) “For to you it has been granted **for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.**”

We will examine our lesson text by four homiletical points of **Orientation to U/S Ministry**.

- (Gen.40:1-2) Jail awaiting trial
- (Gen.40:3-4) Jail inmates
- (Gen.40:5-7) Jail dreams
- (Gen.40:8-15) Jail ministry

<p>This lesson will study <u>five aspects</u> of Orientation to U/S Ministry.</p>
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1. We will begin by describing the three classifications of suffering in the Christian way of life (CWL).

- Self-induced misery (SIM) (Acts 20:7-12)
- Divine discipline (Heb.12:5-11)
- Undeserved suffering (Phil.1:29; 1 Pet.1:6-7)

In our lesson text, three people are suffering in prison. It should not surprise the spiritually advancing, mature believer to learn that **Potiphar** was the chief security officer for Pharaoh (Gen.39:1).

2. Our lesson text focuses on three people in prison awaiting trial to determine whether they are innocent of guilty of the charge brought against them.

- Joseph is charged with rape of Potiphar’s wife.
- Pharaoh’s cupbearer is charged with an attempt to poison Pharaoh.
- Pharaoh’s baker is charged as an accomplice as the attempt to poison Pharaoh

We are reminded of the importance of a good judicial system of undeniable evidence to determine innocence or guilt (Rom.13:1-7; 1 Pet.2:13-17; 1 Tim.2:1-3).

How important is the Lord’s involvement in our everyday activities of life? (Gen.39:2, 21-23; 40:15; Heb.13:8)

3. The spiritually advancing believer must adjust to his U/S for ministry. It is imperative that he understand its importance to the Plan of God (Gen.45:5-7; 50:19-21).

Joseph may have thought U/S was over once he was out of the pit of death; and welcomed into the house of Potiphar as a **foreign slave**. But here U/S is again; and this time he is facing Egyptian law with accusation of rape of Potiphar's wife.

Joseph has learned an important lesson regarding U/S (Gen.39:21) "The Lord was with Joseph". The spiritually advancing believer is responsible for his own six feet of space (Gen.40:4). You must ALWAYS surrender your six feet to the Lord.

(Ps.46:1-2a) "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear."

4. God will create an atmosphere in your six feet conducive for a great ministry amidst of U/S (Gen.39:1-2, 21-23; 40:9-15).

The world (Human Viewpoint Thinking) would say that Joseph

- "made something good out a bad situation."

But Joseph understood that God (Divine Viewpoint Thinking)

- "made something good out of a good situation" (Rom.8:28; 1 Tim.6:1).

As a foreign slave, Joseph would never have had this jail ministry that turned into a great ministry involving the survival of two nations apart from God's will (Egypt and Israel). When God opens a door of ministry, it can lead to many more doors of ministries even beyond your life (Gen.45:5-7; 50:19-21).

(Heb.11:22) "By faith, Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of **the exodus** of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones." (Acts 7:6).

5. The spiritually advancing believer's ability to orient his suffering to the Plan of God through the inhale of Categorical Bible Doctrine (CBD) gives purpose and meaning to suffering in his life as well as to that in others.

(Gal.6:9-10) "Let us **not lose heart** in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we **do not grow weary**. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."

- Joseph's spiritual growth was his classroom.
- Undeserved Suffering was his subject.
- The Word of God was his text book.
- The Holy Spirit was his teacher.
- And his ministry was to those whom The Lord brought into his six feet.

Joseph will be engaged in this prison ministry for two years (Gen.41:2). It will teach him to wait on the Lord and to make the Lord his refuge within his own six feet. (Ps.27:14).

Your time spent in Undeserved Suffering is not wasted nor should it be considered lost time in the Plan of God. It is an opportunity to redeem your time in the Plan of God (Eph.5:15-17).