

# LESSON 2: JOSEPH

*“But the Lord was with Joseph in prison and showed him His faithful love.”  
(Genesis 39:21, NLT)*

## **Genesis 38-41**

Most of us, fortunately, will not spend time in a literal prison in our lifetimes. But we can find **ourselves** imprisoned by our circumstances (illness, financial struggles, family problems) or by our own **negative** emotions (envy, bitterness, resentment.) We may feel trapped and enslaved even as we walk around in what appears to be perfect freedom.

What we need to understand is that God uses even these difficult or devastating times in our lives for our **good** and His **purposes**. Often times all we can do during these times is wait. We wait for a breakthrough and we wait for freedom. Joseph was imprisoned on false charges, yet he **waited** 2 full years before being released! I get impatient when I have to wait 2 days for an answer!

Waiting for God to act can be hard. It is in these times that we need to remind ourselves that God is **always** working and that we can trust Him. Waiting in **faithfulness** is beyond our power unless we rely on God and His power. I once heard a pastor suggest that we keep a mental “Hall of Fame” in our minds and every time God shows His **faithfulness** or answers a prayer, we hang a diploma on the imaginary walls of this room. Then, when we find ourselves waiting and God seems silent, we can take a stroll in our minds down this hallway and **remind** ourselves of all of those times that God came through for us.

When we focus on our circumstances, we can easily become **discouraged**. When we focus on God, like Joseph did, we are reminded that there is always **hope** and God is always at work. Joseph’s years in prison were not wasted. God used every circumstance to bring about His plan.

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### **Questions to think about:**

1. What are some “diplomas” of God’s work that you can hang in your mind? When did God demonstrate His faithfulness to you? What prayers has He answered?
2. What good can come from times of waiting? What benefits have you experienced in the past when you have had to wait for God to answer your prayers?

