

Thought for the Day 9th July - Joan Loane

Joseph is an interesting person...what a life he led! He lost his mother early in life so his father doted on him. There was no-one to teach him tact, and he was probably surprised when his brothers were not interested in his dreams. He may not have realised how much they hated him, with his special coat and his reporting back to their father.

He was seventeen when he was sent to check on his brothers, seemingly with no misgivings. He must have been panic-stricken to have his coat torn off him and to be thrown into the dry cistern...and then callously be sold into the slave-trade and marched off to a foreign land.

There is no mention of post-traumatic stress but we read, 'The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered' and Potiphar put him in charge of his household! However, when he rejected Potiphar's wife's advances, he again lost his coat but, this time, he ended up in prison!

Again we read 'the Lord was with him' and the prison warden put him in charge of the prisoners!

Next he interprets the baker's and the cupbearer's dreams, making sure they knew that the interpretations came from God. But more disappointment follows when the cupbearer forgot him and Joseph had to stay in prison for another two full years!

And then the most amazing day came. In the morning he was a dirty unshaven prisoner...by evening, he was clean shaven, clad in robes and in charge of Egypt! All because he could interpret Pharaoh's dreams...with the acknowledged help of God.

His brothers, of course, were terrified when they realised this Egyptian leader was Joseph! But he reassured them saying it was God who had sent him to Egypt to save their lives.

So this spoilt insensitive teenager was transformed by years of hard knocks, into a forgiving man, able to see the big picture that God was painting!

What can we learn from Joseph? We all have hard times, some more than others, but it is our reliance on God that will get us through. We can blame God for our misfortunes and give up on Him...or we can trust Him more closely as we travel through the storm. It is as if He is having to chisel off the hard edges...it's painful but necessary to get the finished sculpture!