**Step Forward to Live Meaningfully and Fruitfully**

***Founding Senior Pastor Dato’ Dr Daniel Ho***

(Genesis 39:1-10)

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there. The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favour in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned.  From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned; the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field.  So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, and after a while his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Come to bed with me!”But he refused. “With me in charge,” he told her, “my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care.  No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”  And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. (Genesis 39:1-10)

Then you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The citizens of Jericho fought against you, as did also the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites and Jebusites, but I gave them into your hands. (Joshua 24:11)

#  What is Joseph’s experience in life like?

## Comes from a dysfunctional family.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him. (37:3-4)



His brothers hated him because of favouritism. Many question God why they go through. Jacob and Esau were also dysfunctional. Even Abraham had his issues. Sometimes something happens (eg. Birth of a special child). There was a man who walked out on God because his son had cancer.

There was a Harvard professor, Henri Nouwen, who gave up his career just because he had a niece was disabled. Its all about perspective in life.

## Abused and hurt by family members. (Genesis 37:17b-18, 21-22)



“They have moved on from here,” the man answered. “I heard them say, ‘Let’s go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. (Genesis 37:17-18)

When Reuben heard this, he tried to rescue him from their hands. “Let’s not take his life,” he said. “Don’t shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the wilderness, but don’t lay a hand on him.” Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father. (Genesis 37:21-22)

There was a lot of plotting and scheming taking place. Pastor shared in the SIB Men’s Fellowship. We were once hurt and always continue to be hurt by family. It is how we respond to the situation that matters.

## Falsely accused and even put in prison (Genesis 39:11-15, 19-20)

One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, “Come to bed with me!” But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, she called her household servants. “Look,” she said to them, “this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.” (Genesis 39:11-15)

You can stand tall in prison when you have the right conscience. People want to do many things to us but as long as we are right, we can be strong. When leaders do wrong, we are encouraged to be authentic, not wrong by confessing and being transparent. WE can choose not to take offense. We are not the only people suffering, there is a lot of examples in the bible. We can learn from Joseph.

# How does Joseph respond?

## He maintains a right attitude all through life. (Genesis 50:15, 19-21)

When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs, we did to him?” (Genesis 50:15)

But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. 21 So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them. (Genesis 50:19-21)

Coming from a broken family is not an excuse to be bitter and angry to take revenge. We must learn to move on like Joseph.

### He chooses to forgive those who have hurt or betrayed him.

Sometimes we leave church when we are hurt. At the end we lose because we don’t have the fellowship. If we don’t choose to forgive, we will never heal. When Nelson Mandela became president, he chose to forgive the white people instead of revenge. This is because we will be hurt and hurt again. We have greater things to do than focus on the offence.

“When a deep injury is done to us, we never heal until we forgive.” ~Nelson Mandela

When pastor was preaching in KL, pastor asked one of the ladies to get the forgiveness sermon for her husband because he was angry and bitter inside. We must live strategically.

“Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude.” ~Martin Luther King, Jr.

### He chooses to carry on faithfully in his role and responsibility. (Genesis 39:6, 22)

So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, (Genesis 39:6)

So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. (Genesis 39:22)

Joseph carried on with his life and did not go into self-pity or was frustrated. When Pastor Daniel was visiting cell, he allowed people to ask him questions. One cell asked “When you started DUMC, did you expect DUMC to grow to what it is today?” He just continued serving faithfully no matter what. Pastor faithfully pressed on since DUMC started and DUMC continues to grow faithfully.

## He seeks God’s presence (Genesis 39:2-4a, 20b-21a)

The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master.  When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favour in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. (Genesis 39:2-4)

Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined.

But while Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. (Genesis 39:20-21)

The Lord’s presence was with Joseph. We must seek God’s presence. Potiphar and the prison warden sensed God’s presence when Joseph faithfully executed the tasks given.

### How can we make sure that we live meaningfully?

* Seek God’s presence all through life.
* Remain humble and teachable always.
* Be accountable - We need circle of friends, a circle of mutual support, accountability, and partnership
* Maintain a generous spirit at all times - Forgive and move on. Share, bless and move on. Pastor Daniel encourages businessmen to invest in businesses that bless communities. DUMC trains people to be leaders, not followers. If our friends leave the church, we need to go and make new friends and bring them to the church.

## He sees the big picture. (Genesis 45:5-8a)

And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.“So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. (Genesis 45:5-8)

Joseph made himself known to his brothers. We need to pause and give thanks to god and see his will.

## Called to serve if we are going to be fruitful. (Genesis 45:10, 11)

You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. 11 I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.’ (Genesis 45:10-11)

Find a place to serve. There was a member coiling up the wires. If he does this faithfully, God will bless him.

## Seek to share if we are going to be fruitful. (John 3:16, 17)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17)

# Conclusion

In July, Pastor Daniel went to Uganda and Rwanda. There was a genocide in Rwanda 25 years ago. The cleanest city was there. On his way back, he spoke to a Japanese woman who is completing two months of investment work. Three weeks ago, he led a banker to Christ. 2 months ago, Pastor Daniel went to Singapore for a leadership conference. On the way back, he led a taxi driver to Christ. We must always continue to share the love of Christ to everyone.



Sermon summary by: Abbey Thangiah