

The Joseph Story

Part 3

Genesis 39

20b But while Joseph was there in the prison, **21** the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. **22** 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. **23** The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

- The dominating theme in Joseph's life is that he succeeded because the Lord was with him:

Vs.2

The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man.

- No matter where Joseph found himself; He kept his hearts right with God, and the Lord lifted him up...
- Joseph is a servant. Before he ever sees his dreams come to pass, he first has to excel at serve someone else's.

Vs. 21 the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden.

- It might have served Joseph in some way if God had granted him favor in the eyes of other inmates... But the Bible says God granted Joseph favor in the eyes of the prison warden...
- The favor of God in Joseph's life is once again pointing upwards, towards those in authority over Joseph...
- Because Joseph honored authority and he is given authority...

- Joseph prospered in his circumstances. Vs. 22 shows the great authority and responsibility Joseph had in the operations of the prison, even as a prisoner.

Genesis 40

1 Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt. **2** Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, **3** and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined. **4** The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, and he attended them.

After they had been in custody for some time, **5** each of the two men—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were being held in prison—had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own.

6 When Joseph came to them the next morning, he saw that they were dejected. **7** So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were in custody with him in his master's house, "Why are your faces so sad today?"

8 "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them."

Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

Vs. 1

Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt.

- The butler was in charge of Pharaoh's wine and the baker was in charge of Pharaoh's food.
- They were imprisoned because they offended Pharaoh. How they did this is uncertain, but it's probable there was a plot to murder the Pharaoh (perhaps by poisoning), and these two were suspects.

- They were put in prison because they offended the King, but the real reason is because God wanted them to meet Joseph.

Vs. 2-4

2 Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, **3** and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined. **4** The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, and he attended them.

- This favorable treatment Joseph received from the **captain of the guard** shows that Potiphar didn't really believe the accusations his wife made against Joseph. We know this because Potiphar was **the captain of the guard** (Genesis 39:1).
- Joseph attended to the cupbearer and the chief baker.
- Though Joseph had a position of authority in the prison, he did not use it to make others serve him. He used his position to serve others.
- After some time the cupbearer and the chief baker each had dreams...
- The next day they were both dejected and Joseph asked them, "Why are your faces so sad today?"

Vs. 8

"We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them."

Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

- The key to Joseph's childhood dream coming to pass is right here, he has to serve someone else's first.
- This is the ticket out of prison and into the destiny God has for Joseph...

- Before Joseph can serve in Palace Ministry he has to show himself faithful in Prison Ministry.
- If he misses this, he misses the reason God has put him in Egypt...

Question:

Is it easier for Joseph to serve God in the prison or the palace?

I would say the prison cell was easier; I've found in the lonely, desperate, broken moments when God is all you have and there aren't many other things or distractions. It's easier to serve God there...

Often out of pity for our condition we long for the season of difficulty to end, but looking back, we realize in those moments he was the closest...

If Joseph can't pass the prison test, he surely won't make it through the palace test...

Psalm 34

1

I will extol the Lord at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.

2

I will glory in the Lord;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

3

Glorify the Lord with me;
let us exalt his name together.

4

I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.

5

Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.

6

This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.

7

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,
and he delivers them.

8

Taste and see that the Lord is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

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15

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are attentive to their cry;

— — —

17

The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.

18

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

19

The righteous person may have many troubles,
but the Lord delivers him from them all;

- In this Psalm David refers to the afflicted, the poor man, the righteous, the brokenhearted, the crushed in spirit...
- He says Praise Him, Exalt Him, seek Him and He will deliver you, your face will be radiant, never covered with shame, the angel of the Lord will encamp around you, he will be close to you and you will be delivered from all your troubles.

The beginning of Joseph's ministry was prison ministry...

- The time Joseph spent serving the Lord in prison and serving others was the very thing that prepared him to serve the Lord faithfully in the palace.

Vs. 8

Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

"This is a window into the heart of Joseph. Men who are consumed with anger and bitterness do not often take a concern for the personal problems of others like this." David Guzik

- Joseph is not dissuaded by his past...
- He is not disillusioned because his dream hasn't come to pass...
- Joseph isn't bitter or mad at God...
- Joseph is still alive with faith...
- He says, "Tell me your dreams"

Vs. 9-23

9 So the chief cupbearer told Joseph his dream. He said to him, "In my dream I saw a vine in front of me, **10** and on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes. **11** Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in his hand."

12 "This is what it means," Joseph said to him. "The three branches are three days. **13** Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. **14** But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. **15** I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favorable interpretation, he said to Joseph, “I too had a dream: On my head were three baskets of bread. **17** In the top basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head.”

18 “This is what it means,” Joseph said. “The three baskets are three days. **19** Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale your body on a pole. And the birds will eat away your flesh.”

20 Now the third day was Pharaoh’s birthday, and he gave a feast for all his officials. He lifted up the heads of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker in the presence of his officials: **21** He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh’s hand— **22** but he impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation.

23 The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.

Genesis 41

1 When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream:

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8 In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

9 Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “Today I am reminded of my shortcomings.

— — —

14 So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

Closing:

Genesis 40:23

The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.

- The chief cupbearer may have forgotten Joseph, but God didn't...
- God's timing for Joseph is perfect even though it's wasn't convenient...
- Joseph was faithful...

The same is true for us; people may forget or forsake you, but God doesn't...

His timing may not always be convenient in our lives but it is perfect...

Heaven is full of faithful people...

There are certain words every person wants to hear God say when we stand before him: "Well done my good and faithful servant"

It's not good and talented, or good and popular...
it's good and faithful...

Matthew 25:33

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'