

Turn in your Bible tonight to Genesis Chapter 41. We will be looking at verses 37 to 57. What we have learned over the past few weeks is that Joseph was in prison and had been given the duty to attend to the Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker. The cupbearer and the baker had made the Pharaoh mad, and he threw them into the same prison as Joseph. The cupbearer and baker had dreams that disturbed them immensely.

Joseph saw them and asked what they were so troubled about. They shared their dreams with Joseph, and he interpreted the dreams with God's help. The interpretation for the baker was not very favorable for him and in three days he was executed. The interpretation for the cupbearer was very favorable for the cupbearer. He was going to get out of prison, be restored to his former position.

All Joseph asked of the cupbearer was that when he was back in front of Pharaoh to remember him and tell the Pharaoh about Joseph so that he could get out of prison as well, because he was innocent of all the charges against him.

But the cupbearer forgot him.

Now, last week, we saw that after two years, and that was two full years, the cupbearer finally remembered Joseph. Something happened that jogged the cupbearer's mind. What happened was that Pharaoh had a dream of his own and no one could interpret, and it was like, "Oh yeah, Joseph!" The cupbearer told the Pharaoh about Joseph. Look at verses 9 through 13 of Chapter 41.

Genesis 41:9-13

⁹ Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "I remember my offenses today. ¹⁰ When Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, ¹¹ we dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own interpretation. ¹² A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream. ¹³ And as he interpreted to us, so it came about. I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged."

We can only speculate why the cupbearer did not tell the Pharaoh of Joseph when he was released from prison. We can only speculate if the cupbearer had told anybody in those two years of how he got out of prison and the dream Joseph interpreted for him. Wait! Can we only speculate? Or once again we see in Joseph's life the divine sovereign hand of God working in his life.

Joseph wasn't ready and it wasn't God's time for Joseph to be let go.

We could look at Joseph's life of one of total mishap after mishap. That Joseph was just one unlucky man. There is no such thing as luck! There are decisions in our life that lead to situations of despair. We live in a world that has been broken because of sin and there are going to be trials and tribulations for everyone.

For the believer, our lives are directed by God, whether a time of peace or time of trial, for Jesus said in John Chapter 10 verses 27 and 29.

John 10:27-30

²⁷ "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

What do these verses tell us? Whether it is a trial or a time of elation in our lives, He's got us! It's like this.



Joseph was never out of God's hand and his sovereign will in this life. Once again, we see God's sovereign hand direct Joseph's life in God's timing. This could have looked as if God forgot old Joseph again. God is always working in our lives even when we may not see what he is doing or it is not happening in our timeline.

Each day is a day that we are to walk in obedience to the Lord. Circumstances don't change that! Jesus said in Luke 9, to be a disciple of Jesus Christ said: ***"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."***

Nowhere in what Jesus says, does it say, ***Only when things seem to be going your way! Zip-a-dee-do-da, Zip-a-dee-ay, my of my what a wonderful day, plenty of sunshine coming my way, Zip a dee do da, Zip a dee ay.***

No! We go after Jesus every day! Because of what the Lord has done for us through salvation we desire to be with him every day. We desire to obey him every day! Because he first loved us, we love him and it is, or should be, a natural progression of honoring Jesus with our lives.

What do we get or see from God in our lives?

Lamentations 3:22-26

²² The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;

his mercies never come to an end;

²³ they are new every morning;

great is your faithfulness.

²⁴ “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,

“therefore I will hope in him.”

²⁵ The Lord is good to those who wait for him,

to the soul who seeks him.

²⁶ It is good that one should wait quietly

for the salvation of the Lord.

We receive mercies from God because they are new every morning, we receive his grace, we receive his faithfulness, we receive his love, we receive his correction. Well, Pastor Dale, you could have left that one out!

These are received every day, not because of our circumstances, but because of God’s greatness, holiness, and power and that we are his child, if you are saved, and no one or nothing can snatch us out of his hand!

The cupbearer remembered Joseph and told the Pharaoh and as we learned last week Pharaoh sent for Joseph. They cleaned Joseph up, shaved him, and changed his clothes to make him presentable before the Pharaoh.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one that can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”

Joseph answered the Pharaoh, “It is not me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.” Joseph takes the advantage of the situation here to once again give witness and praise to the Lord.

As Matthew shared last week. This does not mean that the interpretation of the dream was going to be one that was going to all be wonderful. The Pharaoh was going to receive an answer to his dream and therefore brings a calm and peace to his heart.

As we learned last week, Joseph, through the help of God, interpreted the dream. Not only did Joseph give the interpretation, but Joseph also gave a solution, and this is where we pick up tonight.

Genesis 41:37-38

³⁷ This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. ³⁸ And Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?”

Pharaoh was happy! I am sure the servants were happy as well. The dream was interpreted, and this might have saved their lives. Pharaoh, maybe turns to his servants and as we read, “Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?”

Before we get excited here, the Pharaoh wasn’t having a Damascus Road experience. The Pharaoh was still pagan and worshiped many man-made deities, idols, in the Egyptian pagan world.

What was needed to pull off this solution? One man to oversee the whole process and to appoint overseers over the land to help implement the plan.

After the Pharaoh's high praise of Joseph and acknowledgment of God. Pharaoh takes it another step. Pharaoh had asked a question that deserved a response from his servants. ***"Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?"*** The servants just saw how Pharaoh was pleased. I don't think they were about to go against the Pharaoh. So, I am sure there was resounding approval. No, Pharaoh! Wonderful! Way to go Joseph. He is amazing!

Who do you think would be the likely choice to be given this position? Let's see, verse 39.

Genesis 41:39-45

39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. 40 You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you." 41 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." 42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. 43 And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" Thus, he set him over all the land of Egypt. 44 Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." 45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On. So, Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

The stage is set! What do you mean the stage is set? No, Joseph has made it! God has made all things right for Joseph now.

This favorite son who was hated by his brothers for the favoritism that was shown him. What was the symbol that Joseph wore every day to remind his brothers of the favoritism their father, Jacob, showed Joseph? The coat of many colors!

The hatred becoming even more ingrained in his brothers after Joseph told him of his dreams. This hatred causing his brothers to contemplate murder. Because of Reuben's urging they did not kill Joseph, but stripped Joseph of his coat of many colors as they throw him into a pit. As we will see later, Joseph, begging them not to do this! You don't have to do this!

Meanwhile the brothers sit down and enjoy a nice lunch as their brother sits at the bottom of that pit. Probably hearing cries, "Brothers, don't do this! Please get me out! What do you want me to do?"

Brought out of the pit, only to be sold into slavery to the Ishmaelites for 20 pieces of silver. The price of a common slave. His brothers watching him walked off bound in chains to be taken to Egypt. Maybe Joseph looking back into their faces one more time. Don't let this happen brothers!

If you remember they were in Dothan.



It was a 236-mile journey to Egypt. How do you think Joseph was treated? Was he treated kindly so he would be presentable to the next person he was sold to? Was he beaten, did he walk the length of the journey and maybe fell from time to time due to exhaustion and they yell at him, “Get up slave!”

In Egypt, sold to Potiphar, Captain of the Guard. Yes, put over his household but still a slave. Potiphar’s wife trying to seduce Joseph into sexual sin, but Joseph not wanting to sin against God refused. As Potiphar’s wife reaching out to him ends up tearing away his garment as Joseph fled. Another garment removed from Joseph.

The accusation that Joseph attempted to force himself upon Potiphar’s wife, believed by Potiphar and now thrown in prison. Yes, put into the high position of overseeing the prisoners but still a prisoner himself.

Over the past few weeks, we have detailed thoroughly of Joseph’s relationship with the Pharaoh’s cupbearer and baker. How that relationship ended up with him interpreting their dreams and now standing before Pharaoh, interpreting his dream.

Joseph is rewarded with new garments of fine linen, the signet ring of the Pharaoh placed on his hand, a gold chain put around his neck. Authority to rule over all of Egypt, second to only the Pharaoh. Joseph is given a new name: **Zaphenath-paneah – treasury of the glorious rest.**

He is given a wife, Asenath - the daughter of Potiphara -which means, “He whom the Ra gave.” Who was Ra, according to the Egyptians? Ra was the sun god that they worshiped. Potiphara was the high priest, he was esteemed as a great man in the city of On, where he led the people in worship of Ra.



On was a city north of Memphis and is also known as, Heliopolis, of which you see on this map around 12 o'clock if you were to follow the green area that runs along with the Nile River. All this to bring Joseph into Egyptian society. Joseph is now immersed into a very pagan nation. More on that in a moment.

To show the people that this has been ordained by Pharaoh, Joseph is put in a chariot behind Pharaoh and paraded him through the capital city of Memphis of this time in Egyptian history. As they paraded through the city, to show that Pharaoh had placed Joseph in this position of high authority, it was commanded of the people to, "Bow the knee! Bow the knee!"

There it is! Joseph is in position where he has people bowing before him. Being second in command of Egypt a life of wealth and ease. I have heard and read of this called, Joseph's Ascension. Even the heading in my Bible over these verses is called, Joseph Rises to Power.

There were people bowing before Joseph, but did that fulfill the dreams God gave Joseph? No! I know all of you remember his dreams. Through the dreams God revealed to Joseph and his family that they would one day bow before Joseph.

As we have learned so much through our studies, in the books of Job, Peter, even in what we see in Daniel. Our trials grow our faith, our trust in the Lord, it sharpens us and prepares us for the tasks at hand that the Lord has planned for our lives. Past tests, trials strengthen us and emboldens us to take on the next test and trial that may be down the road in our lives.



Remember this picture from Sunday and what Pastor Kevin said about Daniel standing there. I've been here before. Lord, you have been with me in the past and you are with me now! I don't like this but I know how to handle it. Focus on you, Lord!

Romans 5:1-5

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

We can turn inward and let the feelings of grief, pain, fear, anxiousness overwhelm us. I will say this pertaining to grief. Especially pertaining to grief of a family or friend that has passed. I am one that will never say, "Well, you'll get over it in time!"

You never get over it, you may be able to deal with it a little better as time goes by.

Still remember! God is sovereign, God is powerful, seek the Lord, trust him and use the grief to in turn glorify the Lord and use that time to grow closer to the Lord, closer to other people and to become more of a witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

With pain, fear, anxiousness, don't let those emotions overwhelm you. Go to the Lord who can overwhelm you with his power, his comfort, his strength, his presence and bask under the watchful care of the one who loves you and died for your sins!

Did Joseph have pain in his heart? Do you think there was some fear from time to time? Did he feel anxious? He was human! I am sure he did! But what we see through his life is one that was faithful to God in every circumstance. In Chapter 39 verse 21 the Word of God says, "But, the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor!"

Think about all that has happened to Joseph. What God was doing with his life was not just for him! It was for all the people that was placed before him that he has encountered over these past 13 years.

What I am about to say is all me! How about on the journey from Dothan to Egypt after Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery to the Ishmaelites? What happened on that approximately 250 mile, 10 to 15 day trip? At that time in his pain, remember he was crying out to his brothers, "Don't do this!"

In his confusion, fear, anxiousness, he cried out to God. He would be praying and the Ishmaelites would hear Joseph and they would ask, "Who is this Jehovah, this Elohim you keep praying to?" He doesn't sound like any god we know. Okay, Joseph, what are you going to do?

How old was he at this time? 17 years old. A 17-year-old can't do anything for the Lord. They can't stand strong and face fierce persecution! That's right! Just like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah! Better known as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Young adults, late teens, early twenties, as they were brought into Babylonian captivity.

Oh yeah! David, Mary and Joseph, the Apostles, Mark, Timothy! Young person, if you are saved and professing Jesus Christ as your Lord, you are to live in obedience to the Lord. The Lord has a job for you to do. You are to be a witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the transformation you are saying happened in your life. I understand there is a maturing time that takes place but that is a continuing process in all our lives.

Your Christianity isn't just to be put on display while you are in church! Your saying you are a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ and that transformation that has taken place in your life is to be a billboard for Jesus out there.

God had orchestrated all that has happened in Joseph's life, and he still was not done with Joseph. Just because he has gone from, as Matthew said, pit to palace. Just because people were bowing down to him, those weren't the people God revealed to Joseph would be bowing down to him. Just because he was put in a place of power and had all the riches of Egypt at his disposal, his life was to honor God, his life was to give glory to the one in whose hands was his life.

So, it is with us, whether you are a prince, princess or a pauper. Our lives are to be surrendered over to the sovereign hand of the God who created the universe and created us. The one who gave us life and desires to give us eternal life.

*Though through this world of sin I may groan
I realize, It's not my life that I own
For it is yours bought with a price
The precious blood of Jesus' sacrifice
So I take my cross, and climb my hill
For I submit and surrender to your will
There are times I may not understand
But, I know this, I am guided by your hand
So, as the great hymn says, Take my life and let it be
Completely consecrated to Thee!*

God was not done with Joseph, and he is not done with you. We are going to read the rest of the chapter.

Genesis 41:46-57

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, ⁴⁸ and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the

land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. ⁴⁹ And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured. ⁵⁰ Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On, bore them to him. ⁵¹ Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. “For,” he said, “God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house.” ⁵² The name of the second he called Ephraim, “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.” ⁵³ The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end, ⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. ⁵⁵ When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do.” ⁵⁶ So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. ⁵⁷ Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

For 13 years Joseph had suffered, been tested, he had been refined, and constantly put in a place where he had to completely depend on God. His work was still not done. First, he had to implement the proposal he gave to Pharaoh to gather all the food during the seven years of abundance to be ready for the seven years of famine. That is exactly what he does.

For seven years he goes around the nation of Egypt and gathers up enough grain that, as we read, could not even be measured.

Right before the famine he and his wife Asenath, are blessed with two children. The firstborn, Joseph called Manessah. Which means – causing to forget! Now this does not mean that Joseph has forgotten all that has happened to him the past 13 years. It doesn't mean that he has forgotten his father, his family, back in Canaan.

It refers to the fact that he has his own family now. Joseph is forgetting the pain; the pain is being relieved. I liken this to a family that may have experienced a miscarriage and then are able to have a child. It's not that they forget the loss of the other child but with the birth of a child it helps alleviate the pain. A couple not able to have children and they adopt and the joy to have that child that is now their own puts those pains in the past.

Those times in our lives that may have caused pain, the Lord blesses with blessings of people that he puts in our lives that gives us joy that puts those past experiences where they belong, in the past. Then, just the fact that the Lord is with us each and every day saying, “I am here, I've got you! Lean on me! Come to me! Seek me!”

I believe this is where Joseph is beginning to see what others had meant for evil, God meant for good. Joseph is beginning to see how all this is to come about. Even in that there was the obedience and the faithfulness that Joseph would need to show day to day.

From this point it would still be seven more years before his brothers would be before him. Meanwhile, Joseph and Asenath have another child. Another boy, and he is called Ephraim: which means doubly fruitful.

May I point out the names of Joseph's sons were Hebrew names. They were not Egyptian names. That tells us a lot about Joseph and his family. This tells us that though completely immersed in a pagan culture Joseph continued to stand up for the truth of God being the only God.

Either Pharaoh, his wife, and those around him just accepted it. After all he is the man that is going to save their country. Oops, I'm sorry! Joseph is the man God is going to use to save their country from famine. Or some got saved!

Maybe Joseph was inundated with pressure to bow down to the false gods of Egypt!

Joseph continued to give witness that God Jehovah was the only God. Remember when Joseph was brought before Pharaoh and the Pharaoh said, "I heard you can interpret dreams!" Joseph said, "It is not in me: God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer." I think that was a little jab. It is obvious your false gods can't do it! But the God in his hands is all of life will answer you!

As we look at Joseph's life up to this point. What don't we see? What do we see?

This wasn't a rags to riches feel good story, this wasn't a name it claim it faith, this wasn't that you deserve health, wealth and you will never suffer in this world because God owes it to you.

This was a get up every morning, "Thank you for today, Lord! How can I serve you today!"

This was a Psalm 23, ***"Even, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for you are with me, your rod and staff they comfort me!"***

This was a Psalm 40, ***"I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure."***

This was a Psalm 91, ***"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."***

In total submission and surrender to the Lord Jesus, so are our lives! We saw no coincidences in Joseph's life and there are none in ours. We may not necessarily see God working but he not only is working, in most cases he has already, "Set the Stage", for what is next.

Yes, a lot of this was for Joseph to strengthen his faith, his trust in the Lord, but again what has been sovereignly laid out by God was to fulfill a promise, to save a nation, to birth a nation, to reconcile a family, to change hearts of certain individuals within that family.

I close with this. One of my favorite songs of late is by CityAlight, Chris is Mine Forevermore! Look and read these words, and break into song if you want to.

***Mine are tears in times of sorrow
Darkness not yet understood
Through the valley I must travel
Where I see no earthly good***

***But mine is peace that flows from Heaven
And the strength in times of need
I know my pain will not be wasted
Christ completes his work in me***

***Mine are days here as a stranger
Pilgrim on a narrow way
One with Christ I will encounter
Harm and hatred for His name***

***But mine is armour for this battle
Strong enough to last the war
And He has said He will deliver
Safely to the golden shore***

*And mine are keys to Zion city
Where beside the King I walk
For there my heart has found its treasure
Christ is mine forevermore*

*Come rejoice now, O my soul
For His love is my reward
Fear is gone and hope is sure
Christ is mine forevermore*