

# The **Story** of **Joseph**

## God's Invisible Hand in Our Lives

Genesis 37:1 – 50:26

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# The Story of Joseph

Welcome to Week 6



## Review



*As for you, you meant evil against me,  
**but God meant\* it for good,** [Gen. 50:20]*

Just as He did for Joseph, our sovereign God  
is weaving our trials into a good story.

All things work for good for those who love Him and are  
called according to His purpose. *Romans 8:28*



## Review



God's means . . .

*God makes use of trials to refine our nature*

*– our character –*

*so that He can make use of us in new and different ways*



## Review

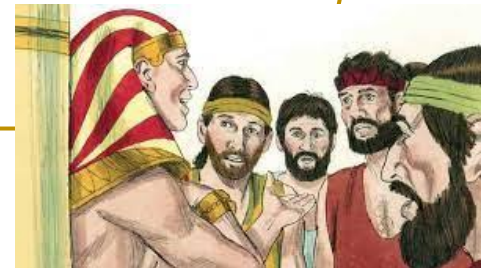


### The Purpose of Trials

*Refinement* of our character is a continuous process . . .

*A true change* in character can only come by way of *trials*.

Romans 5:3-4



## Review



### The Purpose of Trials

Count it all *joy*, my brothers, *when* you meet **trials** of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the **testing of your faith** produces **steadfastness**. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be **perfect and complete**, lacking in nothing. *James 1:2-4*



# Review



AND I RECOMMEND JOY,  
FOR MAN HAS NOTHING  
BETTER UNDER THE SUN  
BUT TO EAT AND DRINK  
AND BE JOYFUL . . . Eccl. 8:15



## Review



### The Purpose of Trials

“It takes the **test of trials** to make us **useful to God**. Some of us are not as useful as we might be, for in shunning trials we have *missed God’s blessings*. . . . **And they will come** so that we might be **prepared** to accomplish His will in our lives *and in the lives of others.*” Alistair Begg





## Review



### The Force of Temptation

“In our members there is a slumbering inclination towards desire which is both sudden and fierce. With irresistible power desire seizes mastery over the flesh. All at once a secret, smouldering fire is kindled. The flesh burns and is in flames. It makes no difference whether it is sexual desire, or ambition, or vanity, or desire for revenge, or love of fame and power, or greed for money, or, finally, that strange desire for the beauty of the world, of nature. Joy in God is in course of being extinguished in us and we seek all our joy in the creature. At this moment God is quite unreal to us, he loses all reality, and only desire for the creature is real; the only reality is the devil. Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God. . . . The lust thus aroused envelops the mind and will of man in deepest darkness. The powers of clear discrimination and of decision are taken from us. . . . It is here that everything within me rises up against the Word of God.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



## Review



### The Types of Temptation

- We can be tempted to give in to material or sensual lust.
- We can be tempted to think too highly of ourselves
- We can be tempted to lash out against undeserved or unfair treatment.
- We can be tempted to quit or give up; act like a victim

**Resist!!**

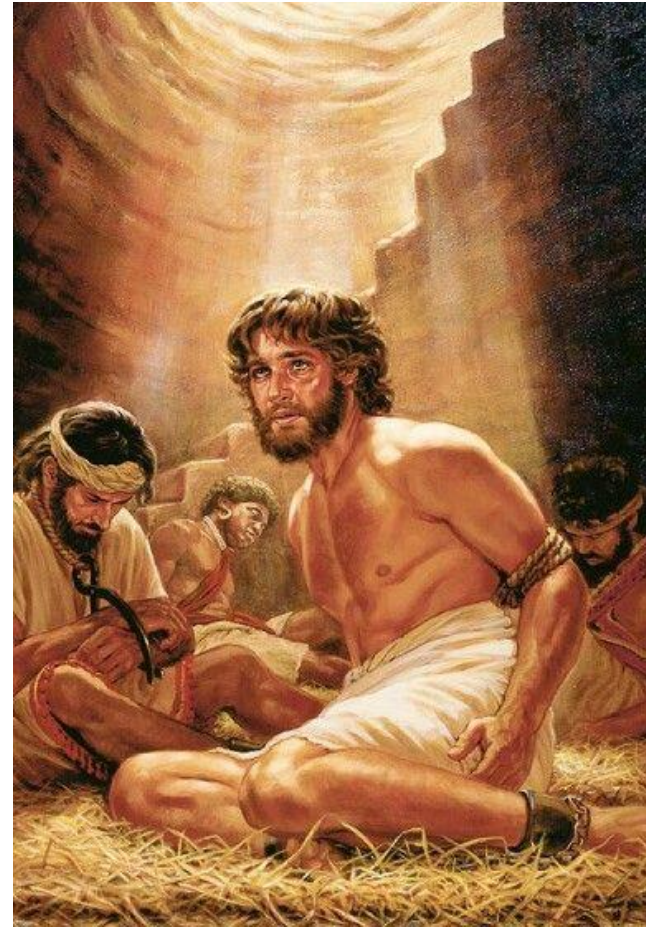




# Joseph in Prison

Genesis 39:20 to 40:23

“... he had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave. <sup>18</sup>His feet were hurt with fetters; his neck was put in a collar of iron; ...” *Psalm 105:17-18*





## Joseph in Prison

And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. *Genesis 39:20*





## Joseph in Prison

OMG!

And any of us might  
be tempted to cry out:

*Why?*





## Joseph in Prison

In the pit again!

**BUT . . .** If we **truly believe** that God's invisible hand is **always working all things for good**, then, through **patience**, our hope should remain intact. *(Although I would really prefer it if God telegraphed His moves.)*

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. <sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. *Isaiah 55:8-9*





## Joseph in Prison

In the pit again!

These verses express a promise:

And he who searches hearts **knows** what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup>**And we know** that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. *Romans 8:27-28*





## Joseph in Prison

<sup>21</sup>***But the LORD was with Joseph*** and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

<sup>22</sup>And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it.

<sup>23</sup>The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed. *Genesis 39:21-23*



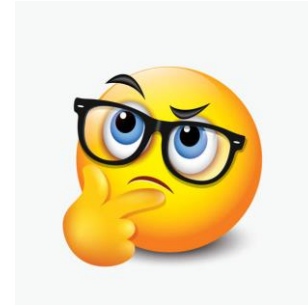




## Joseph in Prison

The Lord was with him

What was it about Joseph that caught the attention of the keeper?



(or should we just assume that God turned the heart of the keeper and Joseph's contribution was minimal?)





## Joseph in Prison

Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord the king of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the *chief cupbearer* and the *chief baker*,<sup>3</sup> and **he put them in custody** in the house of the captain of the guard, **in the prison where Joseph was confined.**      *Genesis 40:1-3*





## Joseph in Prison

### The Significance of Dreams and Visions

- They have always played an important part in the literature and religion of all peoples.
- They have become both the source and the explanation of otherwise inexplicable acts of Providence
- They have become the working material of the prophet both Biblical and pagan.

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## Joseph in Prison

### The Significance of Dreams and Visions

For God speaks in one way, and in two, though man does not perceive it. <sup>15</sup>In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, while they slumber on their beds, <sup>16</sup>then he opens the ears of men and terrifies them with warnings, <sup>17</sup>that he may turn man aside from his deed and conceal pride from a man; <sup>18</sup>he keeps back his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword. *Job 33:14-18 (Elihu rebukes Job)*





## Joseph in Prison

The *captain of the guard* **appointed Joseph** to be with them, and he attended them. They *continued for some time* in custody. And one night they both dreamed – the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison – **each his own dream**, and each dream with its own interpretation. <sup>6</sup>When Joseph came to them in the morning, *he saw that they were troubled*. *Genesis 40:4-6*

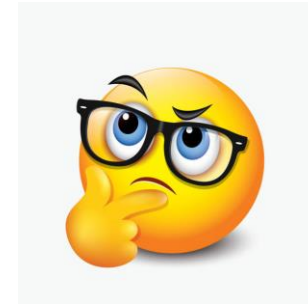




## Joseph in Prison

The Lord was with him

What stands out in Gen. 41:4-6?





## Joseph in Prison

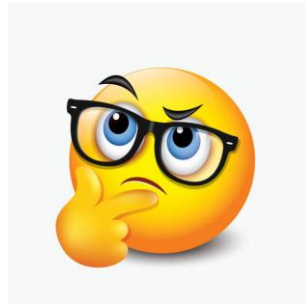
So he asked **Pharaoh's officers** who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" <sup>8</sup>They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "**Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me.**" *Genesis 40:7-8*





## Joseph in Prison

The Lord was with him



What grabs your attention  
in verses 7 and 8?







## Joseph in Prison

So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph and said to him, “In my dream there was a vine before me, <sup>10</sup>and on the vine there were three branches. As soon as it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and the clusters ripened into grapes. <sup>11</sup>Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh’s cup and placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand.” *Genesis 40:9-11*





## Joseph in Prison

Then Joseph said to him, “This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days. <sup>13</sup>In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office, and you shall place Pharaoh’s cup in his hand as formerly, when you were his cupbearer.

<sup>14</sup>Only remember me, when it is well with you, and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house. <sup>15</sup>For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit.” *Genesis 40:12-15*

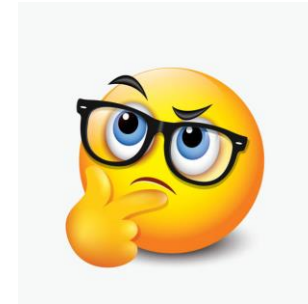




## Joseph in Prison

The Lord was with him

What do you find most interesting  
in verses 9 thru 15 ?





## Joseph in Prison

### The Lord was with him

When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, “I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head, <sup>17</sup>and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head.”

<sup>18</sup>And Joseph answered and said, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days. <sup>19</sup>In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat the flesh from you.” *Genesis 40:16-19*





## Joseph in Prison

On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast for all his servants and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. <sup>21</sup>He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. <sup>22</sup>But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. *Genesis 40:20-22*





## Joseph in Prison

Yet the chief cupbearer  
did not remember Joseph,  
but forgot him.

*Genesis 40:23*

**After two *whole* years,**  
Pharaoh dreamed that he  
was standing by the Nile, . . .

*Genesis 41:1*





## Joseph in Prison

DID HE FORGET  
ABOUT ME?





## Joseph in Prison

### Never forgotten:

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. <sup>7</sup>Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows. *Luke 12:6-7*

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup>Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. *Jeremiah 29:11-12*

