

Passage: Genesis 40

Title: The Extreme Test

Summary: Joseph is imprisoned, even though he did what was right. Choosing to do what is right doesn't mean that everything will initially turn out wonderful. We choose to do what is right because God is holy, and these are the standards that He sets for the people that He sets apart. We have been bought with a price; living with that mindset, sets us apart from the world, and sets us above the world into the eternal perspective. Choose to do what is right and ultimately everything turns out for His glory, because you've honored the Lord and any time the Lord is honored in and through you, you know He is pleased.

Genesis more than history book / It is His-story

It all begins here in Genesis. In chapter 3 we will see the first mention of the Messiah who would be bruised for our iniquities (sin), chapter 5 the gospel laid out before us in the meaning of each name. We will see genealogy after genealogy, but they will all drop off until we come to just one genealogy, the genealogy leading up to the Messiah. This Old Testament, starting with Genesis, is more than the history of the children of Israel and Jewish Nation, this is His-story.

Theme of this Book – for this is why He had to come:

From Paradise to Prison – back to Paradise:

(Genesis 3:15 NKJV) And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

(Genesis 3:15 noted) And I (God) will put enmity (hostility/hatred) Between you (satan) and the woman (mankind), And between your seed (demons) and her Seed (Jesus); He (Jesus) shall bruise your (satan) head, And you (satan) shall bruise His (Jesus) heel."

Outline:

Part 1 – The History of Major World Events (chapters 1-11) (spanning 2000+ years)

- The Creation of the World and Man (1-2)
- The Fall of Man (3-5)
- The Flood of the World (6-9)
- The Tower of Babel: the Dispersion of Man (10-11)

Part 2 – The History of the Major Families (chapters 12-50) (spanning approximately 350 years)

- The Life of Abraham (11-25)
- The Life of Isaac (25-26)
- The Life of Jacob (27-36)
- The Life of Joseph (36-50)

Life of Joseph / 25% of Genesis is Joseph / Creation - Fall - Flood - Fathers

Genesis 37 we now move into a new section, the life of Joseph. We will still see Jacob all the way until the end of the Book of Genesis, but the central person to the end will be Joseph. Joseph is a fascinating study, no doubt intended by God to be. Twenty-five percent of the Book of Genesis deals with Joseph. The book of the beginning of the universe, beginning of man, the fall of man, major world events such as the flood and tower of Babel, patriarch fathers that are the lineage of the Messiah who will bring man back into paradise, yet Joseph gets 25% of the print.

Joseph not Line of Messiah

Now Jesus does not come through the lineage of Joseph, He comes through Joseph's brother Judah.

Studying Joseph - See more Jesus / See Life Devoted to God / All Things Work for Good

Studying Joseph will help us see more of Jesus, for in the Scriptures Joseph is a picture, a type, an illustration of Jesus Christ. We have a wonderful example of a man sold out for God the Father. He will show us that it can be done, and that God will be there with us all along the way. We will see that even in what looks like disaster God is working all things together for good:

(Romans 8:28 NKJV) And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

(Genesis 50:20 NKJV) "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."

Shows Us / Lets Cut the Lines - Go for It / Finish Well

Joseph shows us that it can be done, a life sold out for God. Christian, let's go for it, let's cut the lines, put the sails up, and let's live this Christian life to its fullest. Christian we only get one shot at this down here, let's go for it, let's not look back and wish and regret. Let us finish with power, and let us finish well: *(Hebrews 12:1 NKJV) Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV) looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*(1 Corinthians 9:24 NKJV) Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? **Run in such a way that you may obtain it.***

(1 Corinthians 9:25 NKJV) And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.

Outline: In the Extreme Test

- Remember Joseph (40:1-8)
- Remember the Butler (40:9-15)
- Remember the Butcher (40:16-22)
- Remember God (40:23)

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

In the Extreme Test

Remember Joseph (40:1-8)

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

(Genesis 39:21 NKJV) But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

(Genesis 39:22 NKJV) And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing.

(Genesis 39:23 NKJV) The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

Chp 39 / Hiss / Stays True / Vision

We left off chapter 39 with Joseph demonstration of a man after God's own heart. Potiphar's wife said come over to my houssssssssssssse, and Joseph could hear the hiss of Satan in her voice. Joseph, just a young man only 17 years old, yet a man who would say no to the temptation before him and stay true to call of God upon his life. That calling included a heavenly vision that someday he would rule over his brothers and yes even his father and mother.

Vision - Trouble / Series of Events - Sold - Slave - Prison

This vision got him in trouble with his brothers, and it started a series of events for him. Joseph was sold off to a passing caravan, and then sold to an Egyptian ruler, and then he flees youthful lust for he says how could I do this great wickedness against God, and now he ends up in a prison in Egypt.

We are like Joseph / Be Strengthened / The Remarkable Joseph

We are not that far off from Joseph, we have a heavenly calling, and may we be strengthened to endure for the little while that is left before Jesus' return, may we be as remarkable as Joseph was in everything that we do:

(1 Peter 2:9 NKJV) But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

(1 Peter 2:10 NKJV) who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

(1 Peter 2:11 NKJV) Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

(1 Peter 2:12 NKJV) having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Bad things do Happen / God Allows - Protects

Christian, bad things do happen to God's people. But as we saw, God's hand was upon Joseph, and God's hand will be upon us. Nothing can happen to us unless God allows it. In Joseph's case, the penalty for adultery or raping a high official of Egypt was the death sentence. Yet we see Joseph is not sentenced to death but to prison, God's protecting hand was upon him in the midst of all this unfairness.

The Question / Not of this World / Not Exempt

Right away the question has to be asked, you call that protection? Why didn't God protect him from the false accusations? Why did God allow him to be in the situation the start with? Listen Christian, we're in this world but we are not of this world. Christians are not exempt from the pain, suffering, and unfairness of this fallen world:

(John 17:14 NKJV) "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

(John 17:15 NKJV) "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

(John 17:16 NKJV) "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Abstained - Taxes - Tongue - Work

I abstained, yet she got that guy. I was honest doing my taxes, yet the neighbour got the new car and went on vacation. I bit my tongue, yet people still took his side, he comes out smelling like a rose. I worked hard, yet he got the promotion. I worked hard, yet I still got laid off.

Choosing to do Right - Wonderful / Because He is Holy - Set Apart / Ultimately Wonderful

Choosing to do what is right doesn't mean that everything will initially turn out wonderful. We choose a do what is right because He is holy, and these are the standard that He sets for the people that He sets apart. We have been bought with a price; living with that mindset, sets us apart from the world, and sets us above the world into the eternal perspective. Choose to do what is right and ultimately everything turns out wonderfully, because you've honoured the Lord and any time the Lord is honoured in and through you, you know He is pleased.

(Colossians 3:2 NKJV) Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

(1 Corinthians 6:19 NKJV) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

(1 Corinthians 6:20 NKJV) For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

God uses Events / Not Exempt / Do well to Exempt

God will use the events, situations, of a fallen world to move his people around so He can use His people for kingdom purposes. Again Christians we are not exempt from the pain, suffering and unfairness of a fallen world. God says my ways are above your ways. I can't understand these things, but I do well to accept these things.

(Isaiah 55:8 NKJV) "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.

(Isaiah 55:9 NKJV) "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

You say I don't Like That / Situation won't Change / Use the Trial - Conformed Image

You may say I don't like that; it is not of my choosing, it doesn't seem fair. Christian you would do well to accept this, because whether you accept it or not won't change the circumstances or the situation. The best thing we can do is say Lord you have me here so let me hear why you have me here. Christian whatever you do, do not let a trial go to waste. If you're going through a trial today, you might as well come out of it with something. Be conformed into his image. I refer you back to our study in 1 John 1:4, the making of wine, God is always doing something whether we can see it or not.

Written for Us / Be All There

These things were written for our understanding. And we see Joseph's the wherever he is, he is all there. Christian wherever God has you, be all there, even when you're someplace that you do not want to be.

(Romans 15:4 NKJV) For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Joy

And I'd like to add to that thought of Romans 15 in that the apostle John would say, I've written these things so that your joy may be full. And he's speaking of the truths, of the promises, of the redemption of God through the Son Jesus Christ, for the redemption of our sin, forgiveness of our sin, and the promise of our inheritance, eternal in the heavens. But there's another layer that comes with that as well as he says, I've written these things, and these are the things that we read, are the things that he has written. And there's a place of joy in reading what was written. And I just need to put it to you anyone. If your life isn't experienced fullness of joy, I would ask you how much time are you spending in the word of God, because the apostle said, I've written these things so that your joy may be full. And then I will say to those who are at peace and have the fullness of joy in that don't trade that for anything stick with it, Stay in it the word of God and it will not return void in your life because the Word is what became flesh and dwelt among us, none other than Jesus Christ, as he would tell us. And as we read the Word, the presence of God shows up, no matter where you are, reading the Word, there is a manifest, main known presence of God, because he's there in his word. He'll never leave us nor forsake us. That is the promise, but we can bury those things and suffocate the things of the Lord, the very Lord H himself, but when we start in the Word as we do here on our studies and as we do in our devotions, it pushes away all that stuff that's been put over top and prioritize, that buried the simplicity of the joy of the Lord, and it brings, it manifests, it rises up the Lord. Oh, I've written these things, he says, "that your joy may be full.

1 John 1:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

God uses Every Situation - Do we Believe That / Psalm 105 - God sends Man Before

I believe God will use every situation in our lives to bring glory and honor to God. Our problem is we don't believe that, and without faith it is impossible to please God. In Psalm 105:16 we are given more insight into the life of Joseph. God called for famine in the land but he sent a man before him - Joseph. .

(Psalms 105:16 NKJV) Moreover He called for a famine in the land; He destroyed all the provision of bread.

(Psalms 105:17 NKJV) He sent a man before them; Joseph; who was sold as a slave.

(Psalms 105:18 NKJV) They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons.

(Psalms 105:19 NKJV) Until the time that his word came to pass, The word of the LORD tested him.

(Psalms 105:20 NKJV) The king sent and released him, The ruler of the people let him go free.

(Psalms 105:21 NKJV) He made him lord of his house, And ruler of all his possessions,

Time between Call - Use / Fusing Metals / Iron in his Soul / the Metal Smith

There is a big difference from when God gives the call, to when God uses the man, there is a time of God preparing the man. Maybe the margin in your Bible has in parenthesis there in verse 18 (some translate the original Hebrew into) – *his soul came into iron*. This word "tested" here (verse 19) means to fuse the metal together by putting it into the fire.. God worked Joseph, like a metal smith works his steel; he heats the metal to bring the impurities to the surface, and once at the surface he scoops off the impurities, and

he continues the process until he can see the reflection of his face in the metal. It is with that iron, that steel that a structure can be built that will hold the load, and withstand the elements that are around it. Sheds are built with cheap steel; skyscrapers are built with the highest grade steel.

God Sent Joseph / Not Prisoner of Brothers - Potiphar

The truth here is that God sent Joseph beforehand so as to save a world, a people (Israel), and preserve the lineage of the Messiah. Joseph wasn't his brothers' prisoner, or Potiphar's prisoner; he was God's prisoner. Just as Paul was, just as Moses was, just as Daniel was, God equipped the man. Consider that next time, or this time, you are in a trial.

The Extreme Test

So here is the Supreme test falsely accused God allows it and Joseph enters in to this trial. and it takes us back to Jacob, that he's in a trial, and in his trial he thinks Joseph is dead. And in both of these cases, the Lord could have given a word of knowledge, one of the gifts of the Spirit, to say "Here's what the future holds. And they could rest in that, he could have given each of them who are dreamers and receive visions, a dream or a vision of what the future holds, but he doesn't in this case, but interestingly, he did in the past. So Joseph has to live by faith, the vision that God gave him, the dream that God had given him. And Jacob as well has to live by faith, the dream and the vision that was given to him to be a great nation that will bless all the world and would not be able to be counted by the number of stars in the sky. So a supreme test here for Joseph, and we see what type of character is in this man, and what we read in Roman chapter 15 verse 4, these things were written as examples for us. So we see through the scriptures, the examples of Jesus, and we see through the Scriptures example of great men and women in the scriptures. And we can glean a lot from Joseph and be strengthened for today.

No where to Run

Joseph, even in prison in this trial is being blessed by the Lord he may be in prison and we may say he has nowhere to run, but that is absolutely not true, and you can take that and believe that as a fact, because you can run in your heart, in your mind, in your soul, even in your bedroom, and everywhere you go, where you have found yourself running from the promises of the Lord, separating, secluding, and buying into the lies and the depression that comes from the devil and his ways. But here, Joseph doesn't run from it. He fully steps into it, and he says, "Not what I want, but I want what I get if it's from the Lord, because that will come with his presence, and here is his prosperity. And let me say, Christian.. don't listen to the council of man. that gives you the council to run, that gives you the council to flee, you must listen to the council of the Lord because there's plenty of Christians who, when they get into a hard time, they will take the council of man and the council of their experience, that often time comes with the council of their fears, and they then project their fear onto other people and tell them to run. Guard yourself, protect yourself. And yet here, Joseph doesn't. He says, "What do you have to say, Lord?"

Greatest Breakthroughs

Joseph gives us an example to hang on to and that sometimes before the greatest blessing in our life comes the greatest humility of things that humble us. Things that break us of all of our trust in ourselves, break us of all of our thoughts of ourselves and breaks us to the place that if God's not in it, nothing is good is gonna come out of anything that I do, and I don't wish that upon anyone, but I can see in my life personally, some of my greatest breakthroughs in my life were after some of the greatest trials of my life and some of those trials were just pure, humbling, experiences where the Lord had to break me of myself and my self sufficiency or my focus on these things or that things that distracted me from just the one pure, holy passion, simply seeking after the Lord, and go, as long as I'm in your presence, when I leave here, whatever you have before me, will prosper, whether that's ministry, whether that's a work situation that I know I can be all there and poor, all in because I'm not pouring out me, I'm pouring out the Christ that is in me.

(Genesis 40:1 NKJV) It came to pass after these things that the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt.

(Genesis 40:2 NKJV) And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker.

(Genesis 40:3 NKJV) So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined.

Maybe a Plot

What they were thrown in prison for we do not know, maybe a plot was uncovered to kill the King and they threw both of them into prison until they could sort out the plot.

(Genesis 40:4 NKJV) And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while.

Joseph Serves / Serve while you Suffer / God Flows

Joseph serves them, again a picture of Jesus Christ. Christians a great relief when you are suffering is to go and minister to someone and to serve them. You see as God flows through you, bringing comfort, healing, and encouragement to that person you are ministering to, that same comfort healing and encouragement is working in you as it passes through you onto that person. It is a wonderful dynamic.

(Genesis 40:5 NKJV) Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, had a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night and each man's dream with its own interpretation.

(Genesis 40:6 NKJV) And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they were sad.

(Genesis 40:7 NKJV) So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in the custody of his lord's house, saying, "Why do you look so sad today?"

Sadness

Peoples sadness are truly one of our greatest places to minister the heart of Christ unto them. When you see that sadness upon their face, step out in faith and go, why are you sad? Look at Joseph's example. Hey, why are you sad? And it shows the heart of Joseph. He doesn't ask to make conversation. We see the character that he asks because he wants to be part of their sadness, whether it's going to be a word of encouragement or in this case, a word of aid, but he is not inwardly focused on himself. We can see that he has this ability to recognize the countenance of others when they're hurting, and he has the heart to go, "Hey, why are you sad?" And what an example for us. And I think sometimes when you're putting yourself in that place, you can just read people and see what's going on and recognize, hey, they're downcast. They're seem to be going through something. And there's a place you can just ask, "Hey, you look sad. If you ever wanted to talk about it, I'm available. Hey, You might go, "That's too forward. I just love the opportunity to say, "What can I pray for you about today? And even some of the people who don't believe in prayer will use that as an opportunity to say, "Well, here's what's going on in my life." And again, as always, though, "Man to man, woman to woman, be careful about for where your treasures are, there your heart will be. You want to make sure that you don't get yourself emotionally attached to attachment that you shouldn't be attached to.

Being Vulnerable & Transparent

And we talk about this, of we don't need to tell everyone all of our issues, but there's definitely a place where iron sharpens iron. There's definitely a place where, behold, how good and blessed it is, brethren dwelling together that when men, with men are willing to be transparent and go, I'm kind of struggling through this, this is hard. Then the other guys listening going, "Oh, wow. I'm going through that, too. I thought I was all alone. And it opens up this place that we can then go, hey, I'll pray for you, you pray for me," or I'll encourage you, you encourage me, and there's a place of just being real, and then people can know, I'm not alone, and it opens up for this place of communication, of the things of God, one with another.

(Genesis 40:8 NKJV) And they said to him, "We each have had a dream, and there is no interpreter of it." So Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me, please."

Interpretations Belong to God

Joseph says do not interpretations belong to God?

Still – God Encourages in Midst of Trial

And look at the Lord, how he is encouraging Joseph in the midst of his trial in bed he's gonna see the butler and the butcher their dreams come to pass quickly and it will be a confirmation that God is the giver of dreams. God is the interpreter of the dreams and God is the keeper of the dreams and so now Joseph will go if the butler and the butcher if their dream has come to pass and it's only a matter of time before my dream will come to pass and it will be my family bowing down before me, not in an arrogance, but in the humility, knowing that God has something planned for this young man and he encourages him through others dreams

And Joseph by saying God gives interpretations, tell me your dream is in essence proving to us that Joseph still believes in dreams, specifically the dream that he received from the Lord so we see this great faith that he's held on to the dream the vision that God has given and that's a word for us and that's what hope means. It's faith in the future and it has been said that if you have no faith in the future, you'll find no purpose in your today because you'll just see yourself as going through life by the moments and therefore the moment has to be all and all, but when it comes to God has a future and a hope for me ultimately, no matter what happens in this life, I have a future and hope with him in heaven beholding his glory and having everlasting life in the joy of the Lord compared to as well whatever I'm going through today, I know God is using for today, but as well. He's shaping and doing something for tomorrow, but if you have no hope for tomorrow, you'll find yourself with no purpose for today

God Showing Joseph – Through Their Dreams – I Know Exactly Where You Are

God is speaking to Joseph in these two dreams of the baker and the butler. I know exactly where you are Joseph I haven't lost you. I've had my eye upon you and my hand upon you the whole time for as you know, the Lord was with Joseph.

Interpretations Belong to God

Joseph says do not interpretations belong to God?

Ministry Key / Turn People to True Source / Marriage - Financial / All Things Possible

Here is a Ministry key; Joseph turns these men to the source of all things. When people are struggling point them to the Lord. When people come to me with marriage problems, financial problems, family problems, whatever it is, I lead them into the arms of Jesus Christ for it is there and there only that they will find the answers that they need. I bring them before the Lord in prayer, I take them to the word, and I know that all things will be possible for through God all things are possible, no matter how bleak and desperate the situation may seem:

(Matthew 19:26 NKJV) But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

World Mocks This / Take 2 Scriptures

I don't know if the world accepts these things today, in fact they so often mock the seeking of God. One of the pastors said at a recent conference that he was listening to a radio program and the caller called in with a problem and she said, "I called the pastor to seek counsel", and then the host interrupted her and said let me guess, he said to take 2 Scriptures and call him in the morning" and then they all laughed.

World won't Stand / Apply Man's Wisdom / Band-Aid

The world won't stand for these things today that God is the one who we should take all of our problems and questions to. Man wants to apply his wisdom and understanding to the situation, and as we see man comes up short, and at best a temporary Band-Aid that eventually will fall off.

Be Careful Ourselves - Fix Things / Biggest Problem - Eyes off Jesus / Turn them to Jesus

We need to be careful ourselves because we hate to see people hurt and we want to fix their problems for them. It's good to help people and their problems, but many times their problem isn't the biggest problem. The biggest problem is that they have no relationship with the Lord, or they have taken their eyes off the Lord. First and foremost we must always bring them back to putting their eyes on Jesus

Christ, and then we can go from there, we can minister to them and try to help them through their problem.

Joseph points - then Helps

Joseph says do not interpretations belong to God; he brings them to the Lord's first and then he helps them and ministers to them.

Tell Me / Don't tell Me / You Will get Hurt - Don't Stop Ministering / Love- Vulnerable / You become Like Him

Verse 8 - Tell them to me, please. – Joseph says tell me your dreams. I like that, Joseph doesn't say dreams, last time I interpret a dream it cost me, I ended up in the pit, then I was sold to a caravan, then I ended up in Potiphar's house and his wife wouldn't leave me alone, and now here I am. Dreams, don't tell me your dreams, get away from me with your dreams. Beloved you will get hurt by people you love, you will minister to people and they will turn on you, and it will hurt, they can bring you that point of saying I will never minister again, I will not put myself into the place were I am vulnerable to be hurt again. Christian don't let those times of being hurt keep you from ministering again, pour yourself out, be vulnerable, because you know what? You are being just like your Lord. Oh what He has done for us, He made himself vulnerable, God himself became vulnerable for it is only love that can place you in place of being vulnerable. Be thankful that you are vulnerable, that your heart is tender enough that it can be hurt, because that means the love of Christ is in you. You keep ministering even when you have been hurt, and God will be there to catch every tear that is dropped. God keep all your works as a memorial before him, and He'll say well done thy good and faithful servant.

We Can't Chose our Service

Beloved, truly to be a disciple of Christ, we cannot pick and choose when, where, or who we serve. Like Jesus, for God so loved the world.....Our ministry is to the world, and anyone God puts in our path then qualifies to be loved and ministered by us. Remember that, and watch your ministry be blessed, because God will show you things that you would never have seen or experienced had you not left yourself open, for the world.

Oswald Chambers Devotional

Oswald Chambers has a wonderful word about serving, and being poured out for others (February 5-6 Devotion):

Are You Ready To Be Poured Out As an Offering?

"If I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all" (Philippians 2:17).

Are you willing to sacrifice yourself for the work of another believer—to pour out your life sacrificially for the ministry and faith of others? Or do you say, "I am not willing to be poured out right now, and I don't want God to tell me how to serve Him. I want to choose the place of my own sacrifice. And I want to have certain people watching me and saying, 'Well done.' "

It is one thing to follow God's way of service if you are regarded as a hero, but quite another thing if the road marked out for you by God requires becoming a "doormat" under other people's feet. God's purpose may be to teach you to say, "I know how to be abased ..." (Philippians 4:12). Are you ready to be sacrificed like that? Are you ready to be less than a mere drop in the bucket—to be so totally insignificant that no one remembers you even if they think of those you served? Are you willing to give and be poured out until you are used up and exhausted—not seeking to be ministered to, but to minister? Some saints cannot do menial work while maintaining a saintly attitude, because they feel such service is beneath their dignity.

Are You Ready To Be Poured Out As an Offering?

"I am already being poured out as a drink offering ..." (2 Timothy 4:6).

Are you ready to be poured out as an offering? It is an act of your will, not your emotions. Tell God you are ready to be offered as a sacrifice for Him. Then accept the consequences as they come, without any complaints, in spite of what God may send your way. God sends you through a crisis in private, where no other person can help you. From the outside your life may appear to be the same, but the difference is taking place in your will. Once you have experienced the crisis in your will, you will take no thought of the cost when it begins to affect you externally. If you don't deal with God on the level of your will first, the result will be only to arouse sympathy for yourself.

"Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar" (Psalm 118:27). You must be willing to be placed on the altar and go through the fire; willing to experience what the altar represents—burning, purification, and separation for only one purpose—the elimination of every desire and affection not grounded in or directed toward God. But you don't eliminate it, God does. You "bind the sacrifice ... to the horns of the altar" and see to it that you don't wallow in self-pity once the fire begins. After you have gone through the fire, there will be nothing that will be able to trouble or depress you. When another crisis arises, you will realize that things cannot touch you as they used to do. What fire lies ahead in your life?

Tell God you are ready to be poured out as an offering, and God will prove Himself to be all you ever dreamed He would be.

In the Extreme Test

- Remember the Butler (40:9-15)

(Genesis 40:9 NKJV) Then the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "Behold, in my dream a vine was before me,

(Genesis 40:10 NKJV) "and in the vine were three branches; it was as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes.

(Genesis 40:11 NKJV) "Then 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 40:12 NKJV) And Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days.

(Genesis 40:13 NKJV) "Now within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your place, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler.

Good News - 3 Days / Cupbearer

Hey good news in three days you will be restored and you'll be serving the King again. This position of a Butler was the position we also know as the "cupbearer". The cupbearer was very close to the king because he would taste all the food before the king would eat it, and if the cupbearer didn't die, then it was safe for the king to eat. So the king and his cup bearer would develop a close relationship because anybody that stands in the way of possible death for you, you would be come close to over time

Remember Me / Finally Hope – But Not

So Joseph says good news three days you be back in the Kings Court, and when you get there remember me. How elated Joseph must have been, this guy is going before the King every day, surely it is soon that I too will be released. Not so as we will see.

(Genesis 40:14 NKJV) "But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house.

(Genesis 40:15 NKJV) "For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon."

Doesn't Slam Back / Keep Door Open for Reconciliation

Notice he doesn't slam his brothers or Potiphar's wife. We would do well to heed this when we are burned by other people. Keep quiet, because when you slam back, word will get back to them, and reconciliation will be that much harder if possible at all. That person will hear of your detest for them and it could keep them from seeking to reconcile with you. Always, always, leave the door open for reconciliation. Part of the way of doing that is by dying to yourselves and keeping quiet.

In the Extreme Test

- Remember the Butcher (40:16-22)

(Genesis 40:16 NKJV) When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also was in my dream, and there were three white baskets on my head.

(Genesis 40:17 NKJV) "In the uppermost basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head."

(Genesis 40:18 NKJV) So Joseph answered and said, "This is the interpretation of it: The three baskets are three days.

(Genesis 40:19 NKJV) "Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head from you and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you."

Bad News / House in Order / Judgement to Come

Bad news for you friend, in three days your head will have a noose around your head and you will be hanging from the tree. Joseph again tells it like it is, Joseph doesn't seek to please man. Joseph blessed this man by letting him know he only had 3 days to live; he gave the man opportunity to get his house in order. To tell his family goodbye, I love you, that they too may be prepared. Good example for us, people need to hear that there is a judgement to come so they can be prepared.

If you are going to speak for God, you have to speak both ways. The good news and the bad news.

Verse 19 look at not just Joseph's boldness to simply speak the truth, but Joseph's love in that he tells this man what his future beholds and he's given him the opportunity to get right with God in the three days that he has to get right with God. Joseph doesn't withhold the hard truth that this man is perishing and that he will face his creator.. Rather, Joseph addressed it so he can do something about the meeting that is to come. Joseph isn't afraid to offend with the truth because the truth will set this man free. What great boldness and what great love? And of course, we see the great example that Joseph gives for us

(Genesis 40:20 NKJV) Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.

(Genesis 40:21 NKJV) Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand.

(Genesis 40:22 NKJV) But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them.

Everything Happens / Joseph's Dream

So everything happens just as Joseph said it would, all the dreams came true. I'm sure Joseph was wandering when his dream would come true. When he will see his family again and that they will come and bowed down before him. Not yet, God was not done preparing the man.

Interesting Picture

Joseph that picture of Jesus Christ; Joseph was numbered with the transgressors. He was a blessing to the butler, and he was judgement for the baker. The Lord Jesus was crucified between two thieves. One was judged and the other was blessed. The butler was received into the kingdom, on the third day. The baker was condemned on the third day. So to it is for the thieves next to Jesus on the cross, and for every man; what happened on the third day will either bless or condemn that person. For those that believe Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, then they will be received into the kingdom, but those who do not believe that He is, that He rose again on the third day, they will be condemned to everlasting punishment. The celebration comes on the third day, or sorrows begin on the third day.

Lead Captivity Free

Joseph went into the prison and brought good news. Jesus before He ascended, He first descended to lead the captives free:

(Ephesians 4:8 NKJV) Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."

(Ephesians 4:9 NKJV) (Now this, "He ascended"; what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?)

(Ephesians 4:10 NKJV) He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Communion Elements

Here we also see the 2 elements of communion present; the bread and the cup. The bread and the cup will represent life or death, it all depends what a person will do with them, for they represent the Body of Christ.

In the Extreme Test

- **Remember God (40:23)**

(Genesis 40:23 NKJV) Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

Butler back in his Kingdom / Life as Usual / Forgot Encouragement / 2 more years

The chief Butler is in the kingdom just as Joseph promised he would be, but the Butler forgot him. The Butler went back to his life as usual, he went back to work, probably had a family and went back to them, life is good for him, yet he totally forgot Joseph the one who gave him words of encouragement during one of his darkest hours. It will be two years before he remembers Joseph. Many of us can be like the butler; hey thanks for being their Lord in the hard times, thanks for the strengthening, the encouragement, to know someone cares, but life is good again, and I have some things to take care of, catch back up on, take a rest.

God never Wastes Time

It will be two more years for Joseph, but may we know this God never waste time now that's another story how we may waste time when it's in God's hands he doesn't waste time. He's working. He's doing something

But It's Not Time

And here's the thing, whatever it is, how God's putting these pieces together, the famine's not for two more years. And Joseph needs to be kept in that place for two more years so that when the time comes, they know exactly where to find the guy who can interpret dreams, because if Joseph was released two years prior, the last place, I'm sure we'd find him, would be in Egypt. He would have headed back to Canaan, back to his family, set things straight, be with his father, be with his brother. All these things doesn't know that his mother's dead at this point. He had been gone. He God keeps him.

The reason the butler remembers Joseph is because it's about a dream and that's what sets the stage two years later, oh, right, there's a guy who can interpret dreams now that you say that. And it was God's great plan and timing, call it God's great amnesia upon the butler, but God had a plan and he put that plan in the place

God Showing Joseph – Through Their Dreams – I Know Exactly Where You Are

God is speaking to Joseph in these two dreams of the baker and the butler. I know exactly where you are Joseph I haven't lost you. I've had my eye upon you and my hand upon you the whole time for as you know, the Lord was with Joseph.

Our Ultimate Destination – Place and Image

Our ultimate destination is just not a place, but an image as well. And what a treasure it is to be conformed into the image of his son, his own son.

Do this in Remembrance of Me

This would be a great time to just sit know with the Lord, and break the bread, take the cup, and do it in remembrance of Him. Remember His goodness; remember that we are free because He went to the pit for us:

(Luke 22:19 NKJV) And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

(Luke 22:20 NKJV) Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

(1 Corinthians 11:23 NKJV) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

(1 Corinthians 11:24 NKJV) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

(1 Corinthians 11:25 NKJV) In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

(1 Corinthians 11:26 NKJV) For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

(1 Corinthians 11:27 NKJV) Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

(1 Corinthians 11:28 NKJV) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

(1 Corinthians 11:29 NKJV) For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

(1 Corinthians 11:30 NKJV) For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

(1 Corinthians 11:31 NKJV) For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

(1 Corinthians 11:32 NKJV) But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

(1 Corinthians 11:33 NKJV) Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

(1 Corinthians 11:34 NKJV) But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need