

Day 37 - MONDAY: December 5th

Genesis 40

Genesis 40:1–23 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. And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined. And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while. 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. And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they were sad. 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?" 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." Then the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "Behold, in

my dream a vine was before me, and in the vine were three branches; it was as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes. 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." And Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days. 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. 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. 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." 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. In the uppermost basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head." So Joseph answered and said, "This is the interpretation of it: The three baskets are three days. 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." 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. Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 2 – Uses the word “butler”. This word in Hebrew means “causing to drink (Strong’s)”. This individual had the responsibility over all the “cupbearers”. Jamieson–Faucet–Brown states “not only the cup–bearer, but overseer of the royal vineyards, as well as the cellars; having, probably, some hundreds of people under him.”

This commentary goes on to say this about the position of “baker”: “or cook, had the superintendence of everything relating to the providing and preparing of meats for the royal table. Both officers, especially the former, were, in ancient Egypt, always persons of great rank and importance; and from the confidential nature of their

employment, as well as their access to the royal presence, they were generally the highest nobles or princes of the blood.”

Verse 4 – This is interesting. We learned in Genesis 37:36 that the “Captain of the Guard” (“Chief of the Butchers”) was Potiphar. We see in Genesis 39:20 that Joseph is confined in the dungeon where the King’s prisoners are sent. And in Genesis 39:23 we see Joseph is placed under the supervision of the “Keeper of the Prison”. Yet here in Genesis 40:4, we again see it’s Potiphar, the Captain of the Guard, who places Joseph over two of the King’s newest prisoners.

Jamieson–Faucet–Brown states “not the keeper, though he was most favorably disposed; but Potiphar himself, who, it would seem, was by this time satisfied of the perfect innocence of the young Hebrew; though, probably, to prevent the exposure of his family, he deemed it prudent to detain him in confinement”.

Verse 5 – Both men, Chief Cupbearer & Chief Baker, have dreams in the same night, both unique to each man. This likely added to the fact that they knew these dreams had special meaning, since this occurred at the same time.

Verse 8 – Joseph takes this opportunity to tell these two powerful men where true interpretations of dreams comes from: God alone!

The Chief–Cupbearer would have a dream dealing with his exact profession of overseeing the grape vines and being the cupbearer to the King himself.

Likewise, the Chief Baker/Cook has several baskets of food, but the highest one had all kinds of “baked goods”. The Hebrew here means “an eatable” (Food, fruit, meat). It doesn’t mean necessarily bread or bread products, although it could have been. Josephus records the as “sweetmeats and other eatables”.

Verse 14 – Joseph asks that the Chief Cup–Bearer mentions him to Pharaoh but we learn in verse 23 that he doesn’t.

The UCG Bible reading includes this on the chapter:

“It is not clear how long Joseph was in prison, but we can deduce that the total time of his service to Potiphar and his imprisonment to this point was around 11 years. It had been that long since he was sold by his brothers at age 17, making him about 28 when the same Potiphar, captain of the guard who was over the prison warden, makes Joseph serve Pharaoh’s chief butler and chief baker during their

confinement. Home may have seemed a distant memory for Joseph by now, given the time he had been away and the trouble in which he now found himself. Being in prison, he was a long way from having his family bow down to him—but he continued to make the best of the situation at hand, and God blessed him for his efforts.

Knowing that God had some big plans in mind, we can assume that these events are His doing. It surely was no accident that two high servants of Pharaoh's court were both placed in the same prison as Joseph. If they had been servants of any lesser government official, one may not have been in a place to later tell Pharaoh about Joseph's gift of interpretation. After hearing the prisoners' dreams, Joseph explains their meaning—and the events come to pass just as he foretells. Perhaps after this divine fulfillment, Joseph remembered his own dream, pondering his past and his future.

It actually seems a little hard to believe that the butler, after seeing Joseph's interpretation of the dream come true before his eyes, would actually forget about Joseph's request for a mention to Pharaoh. Perhaps he was so elated to be restored to his high position that he forgot what Joseph had asked of him. Or maybe after getting his job

back as chief butler, he didn't want to give someone else the limelight, or perhaps he feared to remind the pharaoh that he had previously sent him to prison. Whatever the reason, God was still orchestrating events to His timetable—leaving Joseph imprisoned for another two full years before delivering him, illustrating once again that we should be patient as we wait on God. It may take some time, maybe even a *lifetime*, but He *will* come through on His promises.” [END]