

Genesis 40

Verses 1-3

Then it came about after these things, *that* the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. ² And Pharaoh was furious with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. ³ So he put them in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, in the prison, the *same* place where Joseph was imprisoned. ⁴ And the captain of the bodyguard put Joseph in charge of them, and he took care of them; and they were in confinement for some time.

The cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt

This office of cupbearer was held by Nehemiah in the court of Persia

See Nehemiah 1:11

It could be compared to the Director of Secret Security for the President

⁴ And the captain of the bodyguard put Joseph in charge of them, and he took care of them; and they were in confinement for some time.

We don't know what these two men did to offend the king or how long they were in jail but "some time" probably means a number of years

Verses 5-8

⁵ Then the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, both had a dream the same night, each man with his *own* dream *and* each dream with its *own* interpretation. ⁶ When Joseph came to them in the morning and saw them, behold, they were dejected. ⁷ So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in confinement in his master's house, "Why are your faces so sad today?" ⁸ And they said to him, "We have had a dream, and there is no one to interpret it." Then Joseph said to them, "Do interpretations not belong to God? Tell *it* to me, please."

⁶ When Joseph came to them in the morning and saw them, behold, they were dejected.

Even though Joseph had been in Jail longer than these two men, and for an unjustified accusation, he was able to show them compassion and offered to help

We have had a dream, and there is no one to interpret it.

They may have asked a number of prisoners for their thoughts, but no one was able to help them

Then Joseph said to them, “Do interpretations not belong to God? Tell *it* to me, please.”

Joseph had had dreams as a teenager and his brothers and Jacob understand their meaning without any help but these dreams were a little more complicated

If Joseph didn't understand the meaning of the dreams he knew that he could bring it before God

Verses 9-13

⁹ So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph, saying to him, “In my dream, behold, *there was* a vine in front of me; ¹⁰ and on the vine *were* three branches. And as it was budding, its blossoms came out, *and* its clusters produced ripe grapes. ¹¹ Now Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; so I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I put the cup into Pharaoh's hand.” ¹² Then Joseph said to him, “This is the interpretation of it: the three branches are three days; ¹³ within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office; and you will put Pharaoh's cup into his hand as in your former practice when you were his cupbearer. ¹⁴ Only keep me in mind when it goes well for you, and please do me a kindness by mentioning me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this prison. ¹⁵ For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon.”

So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph

There is no indication here that Joseph needed to check with God

Some elements of the dream seem obvious but others do not

How did Joseph know the three branches signified 3 days and not 3 weeks or 3 months?

Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office

This was good news for the cupbearer, for the baker not so much

Only keep me in mind when it goes well for you

Joseph discerned that this event was designed to trigger his release but the cupbearer's belated remembrance delayed his freedom

¹⁵ For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon."

Joseph was taken from his father and home unjustly and then received an extended imprisonment for being loyal to the king

Some suffering comes from doing what is right (suffering for the sake of righteousness)

Verses 16-19

¹⁶ When the chief baker saw that he had interpreted favorably, he said to Joseph, "I also saw in my dream, and behold, *there were* three baskets of white bread on my head; ¹⁷ and in the top basket *there were* some of all kinds of baked food for Pharaoh, and the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head." ¹⁸ Then Joseph answered and said, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; ¹⁹ within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and will hang you on a wooden *post*, and the birds will eat your flesh off you."

The three baskets are three days; ¹⁹ within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and will hang you on a wooden *post*, and the birds will eat your flesh off you.”

When Joseph saw that the faces of the baker and cupbearer were sad, he showed them some compassion

But here he didn't hesitate for a second to give the baker the bad news and it comes across as rather harsh

However, since this was a revelation from God, Joseph may have felt compelled to deliver it quickly and without any compassion

Verses 20-23

²⁰ So it came about on the third day, *which was Pharaoh's birthday*, that he held a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. ²¹ He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand; ²² but he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. ²³ Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

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

This must have been a huge disappointment for Joseph

He had helped a fellow prisoner, but the good deed was forgotten and Joseph remained in jail.

Sometimes the refining fire can really burn.