

## 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. <sup>2</sup> And Pharaoh was furious with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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.

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.

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

See Nehemiah 1:11

<sup>11</sup> Please, Lord, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and please make Your servant successful today and grant him mercy before this man.” Now I was the cupbearer to the king.

The position of cup Bearer had the following role in the court of the king:

### 1. Guard Against Poison:

Due to the constant fear of poisoning, cupbearers were required to be trustworthy and often had to taste the drink before serving it to the king, ensuring it was safe.

### 2. High-Ranking Position:

The position of cupbearer was considered a high-ranking role within the royal court, often granting the holder considerable influence and access to the king.

### 3. Trusted Advisor:

Because of their close proximity to the king, cupbearers often became trusted advisors, privy to the king's most intimate and secret conversations.

**<sup>3</sup> 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.**

We don't know for sure but it sounds like the 3 men, Joseph, the cupbearer and the baker were separated from the general population of prisoners. The house of the captain of the body guard may have been attached to the prison and a part of it was used to confine prisoners that were of a higher social standing.

**<sup>4</sup> 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

**<sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> When Joseph came to them in the morning and saw them, behold, they were dejected. <sup>7</sup> So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in confinement in his master's house, "Why are your faces so sad today?" <sup>8</sup> 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."**

**<sup>7</sup> So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in confinement in his master's house, "Why are your faces so sad today?"**

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.

**<sup>8</sup> 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."**

Joseph had not heard the dreams of these men yet but he knew that even if he could not interpret them he knew where to go to get the answer.

Verses 9-13

<sup>9</sup> So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph, saying to him, “In my dream, behold, *there was* a vine in front of me; <sup>10</sup> and on the vine *were* three branches. And as it was budding, its blossoms came out, *and* its clusters produced ripe grapes. <sup>11</sup> 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.” <sup>12</sup> Then Joseph said to him, “This is the interpretation of it: the three branches are three days; <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> 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.”

<sup>12</sup> Then Joseph said to him, “This is the interpretation of it: the three branches are three days;

There is no indication here that Joseph checked with God concerning the dreams interpretation but if that was the case how did Joseph know the three branches signified 3 days and not 3 weeks or 3 months?

<sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> 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 discerned that this event was designed to trigger his release from prison but that did not happen as quickly as he hoped.

Joseph was taken from his father and home unjustly and then received an extended imprisonment for being loyal to Potiphar. Some suffering comes from doing what is right (suffering for the sake of righteousness).

See 1 Peter 2:18 – 20

<sup>20</sup> For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

#### Verses 16 - 19

**<sup>16</sup> 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; <sup>17</sup> 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.” <sup>18</sup> Then Joseph answered and said, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; <sup>19</sup> 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.”**

**<sup>18</sup> Then Joseph answered and said, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; <sup>19</sup> 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 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.

Again, if Joseph didn't consult with God about the interpretation of this dream how did he know the baker would be hung on a wooden post?

#### Verses 20 - 23

**<sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand; <sup>22</sup> but he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. <sup>23</sup> 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 (the pun was intended). ☺☹