

## *Waiting Upon the Lord*

*Genesis 40:1-23*

*“Isn’t it remarkable! Joseph is at the lowest point of his career to judge from outward circumstances. We would say, ‘If ever a man was abandoned both by God and man, it is surely Joseph in Potiphar’s prison. He will never emerge from the dungeon alive.’ But God had not forgotten Joseph and he now intervened again by turning the heart of the king against his chief cupbearer and baker so that these two high officials were brought to the very prison in which Joseph was confined. Although it took several years (cf. Gen. 41:1), it was through this contact that Joseph was finally lifted from the prison to the palace.*

*All this was for Joseph’s sake, though he could not have been fully aware of it at the time. What about you? Is God not also working out the circumstantial details of our life? One commentator writes correctly, ‘God directed everyone from king to jailer as easily as you set a watch or wind its spring. How sinful, therefore, for a Christian to worry or fret. God moves the very stars in their orbits to work his will, and he rules the passions of men and the decisions of those in authority to accomplish what he had planned.’*

*That is why Christians should not fret at the loss of a job, a flat tire, a bout of unexpected sickness, or whatever. God is God, and ‘we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him’ (Rom. 8:28).” Boice*

- I. Joseph was seventeen when he had to deal with life changing circumstances that he could do nothing about. He had been sinned against by his brothers in a hurtful and inexcusable way that radically changed the course of his life. He had every reason to be bitter and angry, but by God’s grace he somehow found it within himself to forgive and do the best he could in the situation he found himself in. We know that his primary focus was on God. We can surmise that he had a strong faith and a strong sense of responsibility toward living well before Him. God honored his Christlike attitude by blessing him in all he did. Joseph provides us with a powerful example of the power of forgiveness by staying God centered in his approach to life. It also speaks of the power of grace and its effect on others. It seems that the absence of the root of bitterness in his heart steeled him in not using what happened to him as an excuse to act out in sinful ways, i.e., to act out through sexual promiscuity and feel justified in it.

Col. 3:23-24

Gen. 39:11ff.

Gen. 39:9

1 Jn. 1:5-7

**Heb. 12:14-15** *14 Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;*

- II. To be conformed more and more into the image of Christ is a process God puts us through to prepare us for glory. To our fallible way of thinking, it might seem unnecessary since we'll be given glorified bodies and minds anyway, but that's not the point. The reason he does that is so that we are enabled and equipped to stand firm in the faith and to be salt and light in a world steeped in Satan's ideology of godlessness. We see that with how He orchestrated the trials and testing in Joseph's life to produce in him perseverance, character, and hope. We see its fruit in how he responded to his circumstances, to Potiphar's wife and in how he treated the chief baker and cup bearer in their time of need. The difference between a believer who never moves beyond a shallow faith buffeted to and fro by the waves of doubt and uncertainty, and a believer who is mature and stable in their walk with the Lord, is their level of trust in God by taking to heart that He is truly working all things to the good of those who love him (Rom. 8:28). We may lose sight of that at times, depending on the trial(s) we are going through, that's understandable, but it must be momentary at best. For He says in Hebrews 11:6 that, *without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

Gen. 40:1-22

Rom. 5:3-5

James 1:2-6

Heb. 12:11

Gen. 39:20-23

Act. 2:17 (Joel 2:28)

Micah 6:8

**Romans 5:3-5** *3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

- III. Genesis 40 ends on a solemn note for Joseph. It's a place where many of us find ourselves at times and it is a place that can be extremely disheartening if we're not careful by thinking that God has abandoned us. When Joseph asked the chief cupbearer to remember him, we can almost hear him emphatically saying, I got your back bro, you can count on it. As time went on, Joseph realized that he didn't. *"The story of Joseph's being forgotten by Pharaoh's chief cupbearer leads to certain lessons, and the first is to 'stop trusting in man, who has but breath in his nostrils. Of what account is he?' (Isa. 2:22). That is, 'Why trust a creature who can only live by taking one breath at a time? If he misses only one breath, he dies. Trust God, who is the eternal breath from whom all our little breaths come.'... Second, allow disillusionment with man to turn you to the love and faithfulness of God. Men and women may forget you, but Jesus never will... Third, wait for God." (Boice) He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (Isa. 40:28-31)*

Gen. 40:23

Ps. 105:18

Heb. 12:15

Isa. 2:22

Ps. 118:8

Ps. 56:3

**Ps. 27:13-14** *I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. 14 Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.*