

## *Perseverance, Character, Hope, Responsibility*

*Genesis 41:1-57*

*“The story begins with Joseph in prison two full years after he had interpreted the dreams of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker of the king of Egypt. When Joseph told the chief cupbearer that he would be restored to his position, he added, ‘But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. For I was forcefully carried off from the land of the Hebrews and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon’ (Gen. 40:14-15). When he was restored to his position the cupbearer forgot Joseph and two years passed. Two years! If the cupbearer had remembered Joseph sooner, Joseph could have congratulated himself on having the foresight to have requested this favor of him. But this is not a story of a man or man’s gratitude. It is a story of **God’s providence**. This way God received all the credit and the cupbearer none.” Boice*

- I. *“Divine providence is the governance of God by which He, with wisdom and love, cares for and directs all things in the universe. The doctrine of divine providence asserts that God is in complete control of all things. He is sovereign over the universe as a whole ([Psalm 103:19](#)), the physical world ([Matthew 5:45](#)), the affairs of nations ([Psalm 66:7](#)), human destiny ([Galatians 1:15](#)), human successes and failures ([Luke 1:52](#)), and the protection of His people ([Psalm 4:8](#)). This doctrine stands in direct opposition to the idea that the universe is governed by chance or [fate](#).” (gotquestions) The thing about God’s providence is that it is a **constant force** that **does not waver nor wane** in its purpose. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever (Heb. 13:8), so is the going forth of God’s providence. Everyone, believer, and unbeliever alike, is caught up in God’s providential working in the world. We see that in how God providentially fulfilled His will through Joseph. He was not a cheap plastic pawn buffeted about by the will of God for the purpose of orchestrating redemptive history. His life was not a play toy that God hammered into the ground for selfish reasons. Joseph’s life was precious to God, and the things he went through were necessary to bring forth our great redeemer, Jesus Christ. Joseph got that, I don’t know how or why, but he did. He got that he was loved by God and that God was working through him to fulfill the covenant promises He had given to his great grandfather Abraham, his grandfather Isaac and his father Jacob. He, no doubt, considered it a privilege to be a part of God’s providential working in fulfilling His will through him. It is a privilege we’ve all been given for His glory and for our blessing.*

Gen. 40:20-41:13

Eph. 1:3-8

Eph. 1:7-8

Prov. 16:9

**Prov. 21:1** *the king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.*

- II. Having a biblical worldview means that we are to view the world and all that is going on in it through the lens of Scripture. To gain a biblical worldview must be taken seriously if we are to keep ourselves from allowing the world's ways to take precedent over God's ways. Joseph didn't have Scripture to keep him God-centered, yet he was in both his attitude and outlook on life. Where did that come from? He no doubt had the testimony of his parents in how God providentially worked in their lives as recipients of His grace. But we also see that he took seriously the undisputable fact that God was with him in whatever he did (39:3,23). We, on the other hand, have been so much more than Joseph to keep us God centered in how we live our lives. *It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30)*. Therefore, there is no excuse to not only develop a biblical world view but to also be very resolute in making sure we remain true to him no matter what the world throws at us. If Joseph could do it, then we can too, *for His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness (2 Peter 1:3)*.

Gen. 41:13-36  
Psalm 105:16-19  
2 Cor. 3:5  
Psalm 138:1-3

**2 Cor. 3:5** *Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.*

- III. Donald Grey Barnhouse said, *"The secret of power is character, but the secret of character is God."* At 30 years of age, Joseph was put in a position of great power and prestige in the kingdom of Egypt because God knew that he had the character to handle what He had given him for His glory. He was the man God handpicked and matured for the very purpose of preserving His people and the line of Christ during the great famine that would come upon the land. We too have been handpicked by God to bear testimony of His presence in our lives. Our influence as redeemed children of God must not be underestimated. We, the remnant of true believers, are the restraining force of evil through the power of the Holy Spirit until the rapture (2 Thess. 2:6-8). Like with Joseph, we must take our calling seriously knowing that we play an important part in restraining evil and fulfilling God's will here on earth.

Gen. 41:37-57  
Phil. 2:5-10

**Zaphenath Paneah** = *"God's speaks and He Lives [or came into being]"*

**Manasseh** = *"causing to forget"*

**Ephraim** = *"I shall be doubly fruitful"*