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THE LIFE OF JOSEPH LESSON 7
THE DREAMER INTERPRETS DREAMS

As we now go into Genesis chapter 40, we saw from the previous chapter how Joseph was unjustly cast into Pharaoh's royal prison. He was respected by the prison warden so much that all prisoners were placed under his care.

One day two of Pharaoh's officers were put into that prison (v. 15 "dungeon") and under Joseph's care. One was the King's personal butler (cup bearer) and chief of all butlers. The other was the head of the royal bakers. After they had been in prison for a season, one night they both had a powerful dream that mystified them. Being in prison, they no longer had access to the mystics of the palace who were the "established" interpreters of the royal court.

When Joseph went to check on them that morning, he saw their troubled countenances and inquired about it. They spoke of the dream each had and complained of having no interpreter. Joseph replied in Gen. 40:8, ***"Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them..."*** and they told him the dreams.

The butler's dream was of a new grape vine with three branches. They budded, then bore fruit. He took and pressed the juice from the grapes and gave it to Pharaoh to drink.

The baker dreamed that he had three baskets of baked goods on his head, one stacked upon another. Birds came and ate the baked items out of the top basket.

Joseph told the butler that the three branches on the vine were three days in which he would be out of prison and back to serving the king at his table. Joseph petitioned the butler to speak well of him to the King about delivering him from that dungeon.

Joseph told the baker that the three bread baskets were three days in which he would also be out of prison. As the birds had eaten the bread off his head, so also would his head be lifted off to be hung.

Three days later was Pharaoh's birthday feast. He called for the butler and baker to be brought forth to lift up their heads in judgment. The butler was cleared and restored to his position. The baker was condemned and hung. The butler failed to even mention Joseph to Pharaoh. Joseph remained forgotten in prison for another two years beyond the years he had already served.

Some scholars have likened this incident to Jesus on the cross between two thieves. Joseph is compared to Jesus. Joseph saved Israel later, as Jesus also saves us. One thief was given life by

Jesus as Joseph spoke life to the butler. The other thief was condemned to death eternally as the baker was condemned to death.

Another view that I see is that as the baker met with death in three days, so Jesus spent three days in hell (Hades). As the butler was restored to his life, so Jesus, after three days was raised up to His life.

A lesson for us to learn here is to “not forget” those who have shown us kindness, as the butler had done. Another saying is, “don’t bite the hand that feeds you” because it may come back to haunt you as it did the baker.

Every story in the Bible has something in it that we can learn for today’s life application...if you look for it.