

So the Chief Cupbearer Told Joseph His Dream

40: 9-15

DIG: As interpretations of dreams belong to ADONAI, and as Joseph invites others to tell him their dreams, what does that tell you about Joseph's abilities? About his relationship to God? What two ways did Joseph foreshadow the life of Christ?

REFLECT: What is your dream of the future? How good are you at waiting on the Lord's timing? How many times have we all plunged ahead in the dark, only to find ourselves lost? Have you learned to wait?

So the chief cup-bearer told Joseph his dream. Probably he spoke first because he was confident of his own innocence and therefore was not hesitant to hear its significance.⁶¹⁶ He said to him, "In my dream I saw a vine in front of me" (40:9). God used a symbol that was familiar to him, and he saw all the stages of making grapes in quick succession. And on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes (40:10).

Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in his hand (40:11). The kings of ancient Egypt drank only the fresh juice of the grape. The cultivation of the vine, and the making and drinking of wine among the Egyptians are well established beyond question.⁶¹⁷ It was evidently a part of the duty of the chief cup-bearer to press the grapes into Pharaoh's cup, but it by no means meant that because of this, no fermented wine was used.⁶¹⁸

The chief cup-bearer's dream had a favorable interpretation. Joseph said to him, "This is what it means. The three branches are three days" (40:12). **39. Both Joseph and Jesus showed that they had knowledge of the future.** Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position. **The idiom lift up your head means to count.** Pharaoh will number you again among his servants. And you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cup-bearer (40:13). **So Jesus, the One whom Joseph foreshadowed, again and again, made known what would happen in the future. He said:** For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent Me commanded Me what to say and how to say it (John 12:49). Not all the details of the dream are interpreted; only the basic point is made.

Joseph's interpretation involves a striking wordplay that seems humorous (unless you're the baker). **He** explained that the dreams meant **Pharaoh** would **lift up** the heads of both men (40:13, 40:19). In the case of the **cup-bearer**, this meant **Pharaoh** would *symbolically lift up his head* and restore **him** to his previous position of honor in the royal court.⁶¹⁹

40. Both Joseph and Yeshua desired to be remembered. Yosef said: **But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison (40:14). So in connection with the last supper, the Savior said: Do this in remembrance of Me (Luke 22:19b).**

However, **the cup-bearer's** good fortune didn't do **Joseph** any good. Evidently **his** good fortune so overwhelmed **him**, that for two years **he** forgot **his** debt to **Yosef**. Knowing **he** was innocent, **he** waited for **the LORD's** divine moment for **him** to explain **his** predicament and ask for help. And I'm glad **he** did, for it indicates that there's a time to defend ourselves against false accusations - even though **ADONAI** is the ultimate vindicator. There's also a time to ask someone to put in a good word for us even though we are trusting **God** with all our hearts to defend us.⁶²⁰

For I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon, or literally a pit (40:15). The word for a *pit* is the same word used for **Joseph's** place of imprisonment at the hand of **his** brothers (37:20, 22, 28-29). The two events are parallel.

It is interesting to realize that **Yosef** was able to foresee **the chief cup-bearer's** day of deliverance, but he could not predict **his** own time of release. **He** is called to be patient, and to rest in **ADONAI** and **His** timing. As George Muller, the famous evangelist and philanthropist who cared for over a hundred thousand orphans in Bristol, England, once said, "You need never to take a step in the dark. If you do, you are sure to make a mistake. Wait, wait, wait until you have the light. Remind **the Holy Spirit** that **He** is **the Counselor** of the Church and **He** will direct you. And if you patiently wait, expectantly wait, you will find that the waiting is not in vain, and that **the Holy Spirit** will prove **Himself** a **Counselor**, both wise and good."⁶²¹