

Then the Chief Baker said to Joseph: I Too Had a Dream

40: 16-19

DIG: What impresses you most about these two dreams? Their interpretation or their fulfillment? What does it say about Yosef, that he would relate the dream exactly as it was given to him? If Joseph held nothing back when he interpreted the dream, do you think that meant he lacked sympathy? Why or why not? In what way did Joseph foreshadow the life of Christ?

REFLECT: Do you feel that your dreams will be realized or not? How do these dreams and feelings affect your relationship with the LORD? How are you at telling the truth? Are you a person of integrity?

It is only Joseph's happy interpretation of the cupbearer's dream that prods the chief baker into sharing his dream. He is less sure of himself. But when the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favorable interpretation to the cupbearer, he said to Joseph, "I too had a dream: On my head were three baskets of bread" (40:16). Once again, God used a symbol that Yosef was familiar with. In the top basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head (40:17). Joseph was as quick with the second interpretation as he was with the first.⁶²²

Joseph said: This is what it means. The three baskets are three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head as a punishment and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat away your flesh (40:18-19). **41. Yosef was the means of blessing to the cup-bearer, but a pronouncer of judgment to the baker. For it is written: Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree (Galatians 3:13). Likewise, Messiah was crucified between two prisoners. One hurled insults at Him as he said: Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us (Luke 23:39). But the other criminal rebuked the one, saying: Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said, "Yeshua, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Yeshua answered him: I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise (Luke 23:40-43). So Jesus was a means of blessing to one, but the pronouncer of judgment on the other.**

In Egypt, **birds** were sacred and so they were protected. As a result, **they** were often a bother. The experience in **the dream of the baker** was common in Egypt. But food intended for **Pharaoh** would surely have required better care on the part of **the chief baker**. In his **dream he** allowed them to consume **the baked goods** that were meant for **Pharaoh**. So instead of **Pharaoh** taking **the bread** out of **his hand**, **the birds** ate it out of **the basket on his head**.⁶²³ Evidently, **the baker** knew **he** was guilty as was reflected in **his dream**.

The **dream of the baker** was not so favorable. **Joseph's** word play wasn't as funny for **him**. It *literally* meant that **Pharaoh** would **lift up** his **head** from **his** body and then hang **him on a tree**. In the ancient world hanging was not typically a form of execution but a way to dishonor the corpse of an executed person. In this case **the baker** would have been beheaded and then "hung" - usually by having **his** body impaled on a stake - in public view for **the birds** and insects to devour.⁶²⁴ This would have been particularly reprehensible and demeaning in ancient Egypt because they believed that the preservation of the flesh was important for a person to attain the afterlife. That is why they placed so much emphasis on embalming and other procedures for preservation.

It is clear that **Yosef** does not hold anything back in telling the interpretation of the dream. **He** is direct and tells the truth. **The rabbis teach that because he told the truth he earned two more years in prison**. But **he** did tell the truth. **He** didn't give **the baker** what **he** wanted to hear, as did so many of the magicians and wise men of **his** day. Truth is the foundation of all knowledge, and the cement of all societies. **Joseph's** telling the truth demonstrates that **he** is a man of integrity. Oh, that we had people like that in the Body of **Messiah** today.⁶²⁵