

# BOOK OF GENESIS

## GENESIS 40

VERSES 1-4	ADDED TEXTUAL NOTES, QUESTIONS, OTHER
<p><b>1</b> Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt. <b>2</b> Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, <b>3</b> and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined. <b>4</b> The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, and he attended them. After they had been in custody for some time,</p>	<p><b>Vv. 1-3</b> - These weren't minor servants but "chief" officials with intimate access to Pharaoh. Why was the cupbearer's role (tasting wine to prevent poisoning) so critical? What does their imprisonment tell us about Pharaoh's concern?</p> <p><b>V. 3</b> - Of all the prisons in Egypt, these officials end up in Joseph's prison. Of all the prisoners, they're assigned to Joseph's care. What does this reveal about God's providence?</p> <p><b>V. 3</b> - The prison is described as "the house of the captain of the guard"—this is Potiphar's house/prison!</p> <p><b>V. 4</b> - Joseph "attended them"—he served them. Even in prison, Joseph “blesses.” How can you serve others even when you're in difficult circumstances?</p>

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	<p><b>NOTE:</b></p> <p><b>God is orchestrating circumstances.</b></p> <p>The "coincidences" are piling up: cupbearer and baker imprisoned → sent to Joseph's specific prison → assigned to Joseph's care → will have dreams that require interpretation. God is connecting Joseph to people who have Pharaoh's ear. Every detail matters in God's providence. Joseph has been waiting in prison for an unknown time, faithfully serving. Now God begins positioning him for the next step.</p>
<b>VERSES 5-8</b>	<b>ADDED TEXTUAL NOTES, QUESTIONS, OTHER</b>
<p><b>5</b> each of the two men—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were being held in prison—had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. <b>6</b> When Joseph came to them the next morning, he saw that they were dejected. <b>7</b> So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were in custody with him in his master's house, "Why do you look so sad today?" <b>8</b> "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."</p>	<p><b>V. 6 -</b> Joseph could have been consumed with his own troubles—falsely accused, forgotten, imprisoned. Yet he notices when others are sad. What does this reveal about how suffering has refined Joseph's character rather than ruined it?</p> <p><b>V. 8 -</b> When Joseph says "Do not interpretations belong to God?" he deflects glory from himself. How is this different from claiming personal ability or seeking recognition for our gifts?</p>

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	<p><b>NOTE:</b>  <b>Joseph models humble ministry.</b> He doesn't claim personal ability—he points to God as the source of interpretation. He's not pushy or self-promoting. He creates space, acknowledges God's role, and offers to help. This is the posture of someone who has been refined by suffering: more compassionate toward others, more dependent on God, more willing to serve without seeking credit. The "dreamer" (37:19) is about to become the dream interpreter!</p>
<b>VERSES 9-15</b>	<b>ADDED TEXTUAL NOTES, QUESTIONS, OTHER</b>
<p><b>9</b> So the chief cupbearer told Joseph his dream. He said to him, "In my dream I saw a vine in front of me, <b>10</b> and on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes. <b>11</b> Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; so I took the grapes, pressed them out into his cup, and put it in Pharaoh's hand." <b>12</b> "This is what it means," Joseph said to him. "The three branches are three days. <b>13</b> Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. <b>14</b> But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to</p>	<p><b>Vv. 14-15</b> - Joseph appeals for help: "Remember me... mention me to Pharaoh." Is Joseph being faithless, or is he wisely taking appropriate action while trusting God? How do we balance faith and action?</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b>  <b>Seeing God in circumstances doesn't mean God wants you there forever.</b> Joseph serves faithfully in prison, but he also works toward release. He's not fatalistic ("Whatever will be, will be"). He advocates for himself without bitterness, states facts, appeals for justice, but doesn't rage against his accusers. This is</p>

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<p>Pharaoh and get me out of this prison.  <b>15</b> 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."</p>	<p>the balance: trust God with outcomes while taking appropriate human action. Joseph is confident the interpretation will come true—his faith is strong even after years of disappointment.</p>
<p><b>VERSES 16-19</b></p>	<p><b>ADDED TEXTUAL NOTES, QUESTIONS, OTHER</b></p>
<p><b>16</b> When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favorable interpretation, he said to Joseph, "I too had a dream: On my head were three baskets of bread. <b>17</b> 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."  <b>18</b> "This is what it means," Joseph said. "The three baskets are three days. <b>19</b> Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale your body on a pole. And the birds will eat away your flesh."</p>	<p><b>Vv. 16-19</b> - The baker was encouraged by the cupbearer's good news and eagerly shared his dream. But Joseph interprets truthfully even though the news is terrible. Why doesn't Joseph soften the message or give false hope?</p> <p>Someone once said: "How many preachers are willing to preach the cupbearer's sermon but unwilling to preach the baker's sermon!" What does this mean in relation to service and blessing the nations?</p> <p><b>V. 19</b> - Notice the Hebrew wordplay: "lift up your head" (v. 13 - restoration) vs. "lift off your head" (v. 19 - execution). Same phrase, opposite meanings. Both men will have their heads "lifted," but one to honor and one to death.</p>

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	<p><b>NOTE:</b></p> <p><b>Joseph's integrity as a messenger:</b> He delivers the full message from God—both good news (cupbearer) and bad news (baker). This is the mark of a godly messenger who doesn't fail to bring the whole counsel of God. Modern culture wants only blessing, only encouragement, only affirmation. But sometimes God's message includes judgment, warning, hard truth. Joseph had the courage to speak both. The message wasn't his to edit—it was God's to deliver.</p>
<b>VERSES 20-23</b>	
<p><b>20</b> Now the third day was Pharaoh's birthday, and he gave a feast for all his officials. He lifted up the heads of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker in the presence of his officials: <b>21</b> He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh's hand— <b>22</b> but he impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had told them in his interpretation. <b>23</b> The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.</p>	<p><b>V. 20 -</b> Joseph's interpretation comes true EXACTLY within three days. What does this establish about Joseph's credibility and his connection to God?</p> <p><b>V. 23 -</b> is the crushing ending: "The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him." How long does the cupbearer forget Joseph? (Hint: See 41:1—"two full years later"). Can you imagine Joseph's emotional journey during those two years?</p>

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Why might the cupbearer have forgotten? (Human nature? Self-preservation? Overwhelmed by restoration?) But consider: what if God **ALLOWED** the cupbearer to forget because the timing wasn't yet right? How does this change your perspective?

#### **NOTE:**

#### **God's sovereignty in the "forgetting."**

This seems counterintuitive. If God wanted to connect Joseph with Pharaoh, why allow the cupbearer to forget for two years? Answer: **God's timing is perfect.** If the cupbearer had immediately told Pharaoh about Joseph, Pharaoh wouldn't have cared—there was no need for a dream interpreter yet. But in two years, when Pharaoh has tormenting dreams that none of his magicians can interpret (41:8), **THEN** the cupbearer's memory returns at precisely the right moment. Joseph won't just be released—he'll be elevated to power. The delay was purposeful, even though it was painful. Joseph needed to wait until Pharaoh **NEEDED** a dream interpreter.