



The Cupbearer & the Baker

FAMILIES IN TRUTH

Genesis 40



Joseph was sent to prison unfairly, but he did not go alone. The Lord went with him. Joseph served the Lord by serving others. God gave Joseph success even while he was in prison, and Joseph learned that God never forgets His children.

Day #1: Cell Mates

Idea: Get a cup of juice or water, and a piece of bread. Every time you hear the word cupbearer, take a sip of juice or water. Every time you hear baker, take a bite of bread.

While Joseph was in prison, two other important men were thrown into jail with him. Pharaoh's cupbearer and chief baker each did something to anger Pharaoh. The Bible doesn't tell us what they did, but Pharaoh didn't like it one bit!

Both of these men were once highly trusted by Pharaoh. The cupbearer was a man that Pharaoh trusted to guard his drinks. From time to time, the cupbearer might even have to taste Pharaoh's drink to make sure no enemy had tried to poison him. The head baker made bread for the Egyptian King. He also had to be very trustworthy. Pharaoh trusted that the baker would only feed him good, healthy food.

It was no coincidence that the cupbearer and baker were put in prison with Joseph. God had a plan to use these men in Joseph's life.



"I know the plans I have for you," announces the Lord. "I want you to enjoy success. I do not plan to harm you. I will give you hope for the years to come. - Jeremiah 29:11



Each change in Joseph's life was a part of God's plan being put into place by the Lord. Just as you might put together the pieces of a puzzle, God puts all the events and relationships together in your life to make a beautiful picture. When change comes in your life, such as new places or new people, know that it is God's hand at work. Discuss a non-family member who is very important in your life. Do you remember when that person entered your life? Pray and thank God for placing that relationship in your life.

Day #2: Serving Others

Potiphar had control over the prison. He put Joseph in charge of the cupbearer and baker. God gave Joseph the grace to obey Potiphar's command (Titus 2:11-12). Joseph cared for the two men for some time. He even knew them well enough to know when they were happy or sad. Most importantly, Joseph taught the men about the one true God (Genesis 40:8).

The Bible tells us we should take care of the needs of others (James 1:27, Luke 6:31). Joseph cared for the other prisoners even when he was in a terrible situation. By caring for the other prisoners, Joseph took his focus off of himself. He did not moan and complain that he was in prison. Instead, he made life better for those around him.



God is fair. He will not forget what you have done. He will remember the love you have shown Him. You showed it when you helped His people. And you show it when you keep on helping them. - Hebrews 6:10



Put your hands straight out in front of you, at eye level. Look at both of your hands. Slowly spread your hands out to your sides. Try to keep your focus on both hands at the same time. Of course, it is impossible! You can't focus on both hands at the same time! In order to see one hand, you have to turn away from the other hand.

In a similar way, it is very difficult to focus on your own trouble while you are helping someone else with theirs. When things are not going well for you, reach out to help someone else. Caring for others is a great way to take your focus off of your own troubles! And God will not forget the love you show to others.

Day #3: Two Dreams

Experts say that most people dream 4 to 6 times every night. Dreams may last from 5 minutes to 30 minutes or more. But most of the time, we don't even remember that we had a dream.

One night, both the cupbearer and the baker had dreams. These were not regular dreams. Their dreams were from the Lord. People in their part of the world took their dreams very seriously. Before God's word was written down in the Bible, God often spoke to people through dreams (Numbers 12:6, Judges 7:15, 1 Kings 3:5).

Dreams were so important that kings and Pharaohs had men whose entire job was to interpret dreams.

Day #3 continued:

But in truth, these men were just guessing about the dreams. Only God could give a true interpretation of a dream that He gave.

Since the cupbearer and baker were in prison, they did not have access to Pharaoh's interpreters. They were very sad that no one could help them understand their dreams. Finally, they told Joseph their problem.

"Interpreting dreams is God's business," Joseph replied. "Go ahead and tell me your dreams."

Joseph knew that God gave the dreams and only He could give the meanings. Because Joseph abided with God, God would reveal the meanings to him (Acts 7:10). And Joseph gave God ALL the credit.

Joseph was not self-confident; He was God-confident! When you know the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe, you too can be God-confident. And just like Joseph, when God does amazing things through you, give God ALL the credit so others will be drawn to Him.

Day #4: Dreams Come True

The cupbearer explained his dream to Joseph first. In his dream, he saw a grapevine with three branches. It produced bunches of grapes. He squeezed the grapes into Pharaoh's cup and handed it to Pharaoh.

Joseph explained the meaning to him. In three days, Pharaoh would release him and he would once again serve Pharaoh. This was wonderful news! Joseph asked one favor of the cupbearer. He asked the cupbearer to tell Pharaoh that he was innocent so Pharaoh would set him free. The cupbearer **promised** to tell Pharaoh about Joseph.

Next, the baker told his dream to Joseph. He dreamed that he held three baskets on his head, filled with bread for Pharaoh. Birds flew down and ate the bread out of the baskets. God gave the meaning to Joseph, but it was very, very sad news. Joseph told the baker that in three days, Pharaoh was going to order that he be killed. This was a terrible fate for the baker!

God was just telling the men their future ahead of time. Perhaps these life-changing dreams would cause these men to turn to God. In three days time, both dreams came true, exactly as God had foretold through Joseph.

Years before, God had given two special dreams to Joseph. In these dreams, God promised that Joseph's brothers would bow down to him one day. When Joseph saw that the two dreams of the cupbearer and baker came true, he could be sure that the two dreams that God gave him would also come true when the time was right.

Day #4 continued:

God wants to speak to you, just as He did with Joseph. The **clearest** way God speaks to us today is through His written word, the Bible. God's word is not just words on a page, or just good advice. It is the very truth of God, and it changes people.

Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live. - 2 Timothy 16 CEV

God also speaks through prayer, preaching, teaching, prompting by the Holy Spirit, and sometimes, through dreams. But be sure of this: God will NEVER tell you anything that is against His written word. Any time you think God has spoken to you, check it against what the Bible says. God wants to speak to you and guide your life by His truth.

Day #5: God Never Forgets

Do you ever forget things? Has your mom or dad ever pulled out of the driveway, then stopped the car, pulled back into the driveway, and run into the house to grab something he or she forgot? This happens to everyone. You may have forgotten to bring home your math book, or forgotten to take your lunch to school. You may have forgotten to call your friend when you said you would.

The cupbearer promised Joseph that he would help him get out of prison by telling Pharaoh about him. But once the cupbearer was out of prison, he FORGOT all about Joseph!

Pharaoh's chief cupbearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought. - Genesis 40:23 NLT

Joseph was stuck in that prison for TWO more years! (Genesis 41:1) But Joseph was not alone in that prison. God remained with him. God gave Joseph the grace that gave him strength and comfort. God's grace was like a hug around Joseph day and night. The cupbearer forgot about Joseph, but God did not!

People often disappoint us. They forget about us, or forget promises they made to us. But God never forgets His children! God reminds us that He is with us by wrapping His grace around us like a big hug.

I, the Lord, made you, and I will not forget you. - Isaiah 44:21b NLT

The next time you forget something, or your parents pull back into the driveway, smile to yourself and remember that **God NEVER forgets** His children! (Mom or Dad: Put a sticky note in your car with Isaiah 44:21b on it. Each time someone in your family forgets something on the way out the door, read this verse together.)