Genesis 40 – Faith in God’s Timing

PS 105:16 When he summoned a famine on the land

and broke all supply of bread,

17 he had sent a man ahead of them,

Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

18 His feet were hurt with fetters;

his neck was put in a collar of iron;

19 until what he had said came to pass,

the word of the LORD tested him.

1. Two High Officials Imprisoned With Joseph (v.1-4)
   1. Two officials offend Pharaoh (1)
      1. The official cupbearer – one who had charge over Pharaoh’s drink.
         1. Would have been high trusted official
         2. Keep Pharaoh from being poisoned
         3. Maybe even a confidant – (see Nehemiah)
      2. The chief baker – had charge over Pharaoh’s food
      3. They committed an offense against Pharaoh
         1. We are not told what they did or what they were accused of
         2. Probably suspected of plotting against Pharaoh
         3. Maybe a meal that didn’t sit well with Pharaoh caused it
   2. Two officials placed in prison with Joseph (2-3)
      1. They are placed in custody of Captain of the Guard
         1. This is Potiphar
         2. Notice – the prison was in Potiphar’s house
      2. This is where Joseph was being kept
   3. Two officials placed under Joseph’s care (4)
      1. Potiphar appoints Joseph to care for them
      2. Joseph attends them
         1. The same language used here of Joseph serving the two officials is used of how he served Potiphar (39:4)
      3. This arrangement continued for quite some time
2. Two Troubling Dreams (v.5-8)
   1. Both officials have dreams while in prison (5)
   2. Joseph was compassionate with the officials (6-7)
      1. Joseph notices they appear troubled (6)
      2. Joseph asks why their faces are downcast (7)
         1. He is obviously a good attendant – noticing the mood of the officials
            1. They in prison – must have been more downcast than usual
            2. Why did Joseph care about the reason for their mood?
         2. Why is Joseph serving HERE to the best of his ability?
   3. Joseph Trusts God to Interpret the Dreams (8)
      1. Both officials are distraught because they have no interpretation of their dreams
         1. In Pharaoh’s court, dreams were interpreted by professional seers
         2. Dreams were a matter of great importance in Pharaoh’s court
      2. Joseph offers to interpret the dreams
         1. Joseph tells them that dream interpretation belongs to God
            1. Joseph has experience with God giving dreams
            2. Remember Joseph’s dreams?
         2. By offering to interpret the dreams, Joseph believes God will give him the interpretation
            1. Joseph also knows that God is with him and causing everything he does to succeed
            2. Does Joseph still trust in those dreams he had so many years ago?
            3. Perhaps the appearance of these two high officials gives him hope that they will indeed come true.
3. Two God Given Interpretations (9-19)
   1. The Cup-Bearers Dream (9-11)
      1. A vine with three branches that produces grapes (9-10)
      2. The grapes were pressed into Pharaoh’s cup and the cup-bearer put the cup in Pharaoh’s hand (11)
   2. The Cup-Bearers Interpretation (12-13)
      1. Three branches are three days
      2. In three days Pharaoh will restore the cup-bearer
         1. “lift up your head” is to restore to your place
         2. To give you good news
      3. It is clear that God has given Joseph the interpretation
   3. Joseph Trusts God and Asks For Aid (14-15)
      1. Joseph believes the interpretation fully and asks for kindness (14)
         1. Remember me – when you are restored
         2. Mention me to Pharoah
         3. Get me out of prison for I am wrongfully here
      2. Joseph has faith in his God and that is why he asks for aid
         1. He is absolutely sure that this dream will come to pass
         2. In Joseph’s mind, God has foretold it
         3. What does this imply about how he thinks of his dreams?
   4. The Baker’s Dream (16-17)
      1. Three cake baskets on his head filled with bread
      2. Birds eating the cakes out of the basket
   5. The Baker’s Interpretation (18-19)
      1. In three days Pharaoh will remove your head
      2. He will be hung on a tree and birds will eat his flesh
      3. Joseph is not afraid to tell the Baker the truth
         1. He could easily sooth the baker’s mind knowing he will die anyway
         2. Joseph must speak what God has spoken regardless of how it makes the baker feel
         3. He will do the same before Pharaoh when he interprets his dream, giving glory to God.
4. Two Dreams Come True (v.20-22)
   1. Pharaoh has a feast for his birthday (20a)
   2. Pharaoh restores the cup-bearer to his place (20b-21
   3. Pharaoh kills the baker (22)
   4. God has indeed spoken to Joseph – and Joseph was faithful to speak what God told him
5. Joseph is Forgotten (23)
   1. Once again, Joseph is not rewarded for his good and faithful behavior
   2. How long did it take in prison before Joseph realized the cup-bearer was not going to help him?
   3. Why would God leave Joseph in prison (we will see that it was two whole years)?