

Note the delight God takes in telling this story, for it speaks of His Son. He dwells lovingly upon seemingly insignificant details and He repeats parts of the story twice. He tells what Pharaoh dreamed then lets Pharaoh tell it. Note how the God given authority and position of this gentile king is recognized, it is his dream, "God has revealed to Pharaoh ..." Pharaoh recognized this and wisely appointed Joseph to plan and administer the food program that would save the kingdom. He only retained the ultimate authority and glory of the throne of Egypt. Similarly the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, 1John 4:14. Joseph's life and expectations, his rejection, confinement and "resurrection" remarkably parallel the life of Jesus. Joseph, while walking with God, was blessed with experiences and emotions like those Jesus Christ was to experience. He was experiencing the fellowship of His sufferings. We do too if we are faithful.

Philippians 3:10 *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;.*

Hebrews 12:2 *... who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Romans 5:2 *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Colossians 1:27 *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:*

We may wonder how Joseph retained his hopeful attitude and readiness to faithfully serve his masters while unjustly imprisoned. The chief butler's negligent and ungrateful forgetfulness could have led to Joseph wallowing in self pity. Surely he was discouraged from time to time. But what sustained him? His faith! He had been given specific promises. Promises that he would someday be exalted over his brothers and over his parents. That there were two dreams was a sign they would truly come to pass.

Joseph himself stated that principle of interpretation when he finally was seeing some action that might be the beginning of the fulfillment of his dreams thirteen years earlier.

32 *And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.).*

The two dreams that he had in his boyhood simplicity, shared with his ten half brothers, were not just fantasies of a teenage boy. They were specific divine prophecies which faith could accept, believe and act upon accordingly. Whether his parents had instilled some godly instruction early on or if God had simply chosen to intervene in this boys' life, he had become a godly young man of faith. Obviously Joseph was the subject of God's chastening

before he received the prophesied exaltation. He had been selected by God for a certain specific destiny, and though tried by hardships, delays and injustices he retained the hope of promised glory. The difficult times were a necessary part of God's preparing him for the role He had in mind for him. His years of managing his master's household and again managing the prison were preparation for managing the kingdom and the immense task of raising, gathering, storing and distributing food for the world.

Personally Joseph, once he had indeed been exalted, knew he must still wait another nine plus years before he could bring his brethren and father under his loving care and blessing. Their blessing could only follow their humbling and homage before him. This is still God's template for bringing a sinner to salvation and blessing. And it is His requirement for the restoration of His earthly people Israel to the national prominence and dominance He has promised them in the prophets. But before Israel can be saved and blessed as a nation it must be brought to repentance. Today it is unrepentant, demanding its rights and militarily enforcing its claims upon the land promised Abraham. But as a nation before God it is godless and self reliant. The seven years of Tribulation forecast by Jesus will humble them.

. Next we will see how Joseph patiently and wisely brought soul searching experiences upon his brethren leading them to repentance. . . and into communion with him.

Note that God delivers! Sooner or later, but for sure. Each believer has promises and hope as Joseph had. Let us each hold on to our God and Father and His promises despite persecution, injustice, setbacks and seeming endless delays. They are preparing us and perfecting our character and faith to fulfill the work He has in mind for us. Scripture calls this process "chastening." Chastening is not necessarily punishment for past deeds. It is from a loving God imparting the personal discipline and training He sees we need to live and do what He has purposed for us. It is applied to bring one with sin on his conscience to repentance. He uses it to remove bad habits, to round off sharp corners in our personalities and demeanor, to impart endurance. It awakens and strengthens the faith needed for future challenges we will meet in our lives and service for Him. We are witnessing for Him and serving here now, and will again when we will serve and reign with Him above.

Job 5:17 *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:*

Proverbs 3:11 *My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:*

Isaiah 26:16 *LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.*

Hebrews 12:5 *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which*

*speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:*

(over)

7 *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

11 *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

And watch the next few chapters for the chastening God administered upon Jacob's sons and their father as well. Watch for Joseph's patient role administering it. Watch for the results.

Even Jesus was subject to a form of "chastening." Not that He needed spiritual correction or preparation, being God. But he "learned obedience." It was a new experience for One who was ever in command and administering the Fathers will. But as Man he humbled Himself, though God. He became obedient.

Hebrews 5:7 *Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

Philippians 2:6 *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,*

*to the glory of God the Father.*

The rest of Joseph's life is also prophetic of Christ's glorification and reign. He is given a Gentile Bride, a type of the Church. Joseph rescued the population of the earth from starvation and ensuing wars. Ultimately the Lord Jesus will return to rescue the earth and mankind from total self destruction. Man has stubbornly departed from his Creator God and rejected God's salvation freely offered in every age. As with Joseph's brethren, the Lord will take up His brethren (Israel) who rejected him and preserve and bless them. And they will be given their own special well suited land in which to dwell while He reigns. (The Land promised Abraham.) Christ will reign over the earth on behalf of God the Father, and we with Him. Having completed that mission, having brought peace and unparalleled blessing upon the earth, He will deliver the Kingdom up to God.

1Corinthians 15:24 *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For He hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*

All because He could rightfully cry "IT IS FINISHED" before He died when on the cross.

By Ronald Canner, January 19, 2011