

I. Introduction and review: God uses detours (trials) to develop your character. Js. 1:2-4

II. Joseph interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker. 40:1-23

- A. Pharaoh becomes angry with his servants and puts them into prison. v. 1-4 Pr. 19:12
- B. Joseph interprets their dreams. v. 6-13, 16-19
 - 1. How could Joseph know that he could interpret their dreams? Dan. 2:47,27-28
 - 2. The cupbearer will be restored. v. 9-13 II Ki. 25:27 Gen. 4:6-7
 - 3. The baker will be executed. v. 16-19
- C. Joseph's interpretations come to pass. v. 20-22 Jer. 28:9 Deut. 13:1-5 18:15-22
- D. Joseph is again let down by man. v. 14-15,23 Ex. 1:8 Is. 2:22 Jer. 17:5-6 Ps. 146:3,5,6 118:8-9 Ps. 105:17-18

III. Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream. 41:1-36

- A. The parallels to Daniel's experience, many centuries later, are remarkable.
A Hebrew slave is summoned before the great pagan king to interpret a dream, which baffles the king's wise men resulting in glory to God and the elevation of the Hebrew.
- B. Now Pharaoh himself is troubled by two dreams. v. 1-8 Pr. 21:1
 - 1. Pharaoh senses the dreams are ominous.
 - 2. Why are his magicians unable to interpret the dream? Dan. 2:10-11,27 4:7 5:8 Ex. 8:18-19,7 7:11 I Cor. 2:14
- C. Joseph is called before Pharaoh. v. 9-16 Ps. 105:19-20
 - 1. Why would one of the great kings of the earth seek counsel from a foreign prisoner? v. 15 I Cor. 1:27 Pr. 21:1
 - 2. Joseph again gives glory to God. v. 16a 40:8 Da. 2:27-28,30
 - 3. Joseph promises a favorable (peaceful) answer. v. 16b
- D. Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream. v. 17-32
 - 1. Seven years of abundance will be followed by years of (unusual) famine. 12:10f
 - 2. God has determined these events will quickly come to pass. v. 32 Pr. 16:9
- E. Joseph offers Pharaoh wise counsel. v. 33-36
 - 1. Joseph goes beyond interpreting the dream and offers a solution. Dan. 4:27
 - 2. Revelation from God is to be acted upon. Jer. 18:7-10 Js. 1:22
 - 3. The situation is dire. v. 36b 9:11
 - 4. Desperate times call for desperate measures. v. 34-36

IV. Joseph is made Prime Minister of Egypt. 41:37-57

- A. Why does Pharaoh appoint Joseph? v. 37-39 Acts 7:10 Dan. 2:48 5:14,11 4:8-9
- B. Joseph is royally exalted in Egypt. v. 40-44 Ps. 105:21-22
 - 1. The people will all do homage (kiss and bow) to him. v. 40-43 37:9
 - 2. Pharaoh elevates Joseph to the status of Egyptian nobility by giving him a new name and a royal wife. v. 44 Dt. 20:17-18 21:10-13

- C. What is the significance of the names of Joseph's sons? v. 50-52
 - 1. Even after his exaltation in Egypt, Joseph remains loyal to God.
 - 2. God has helped Joseph move beyond his painful past. v. 51
 - 3. God has made Joseph fruitful. v. 52 49:22 Deut. 33:13-17
- D. Joseph implements his plan. v. 45b-49,53-57 Acts 7:11
 - 1. Food is stored up in the years of abundance. v. 45b-49
 - 2. Joseph brings salvation not only for Egypt, but for the world. v. 53-57 12:3
 - 3. God's ultimate purpose in Joseph's life is about to be fulfilled. v. 57 45:6

V. How does this passage apply to us?

- A. Should we expect God to speak to us in dreams? 20:6-7 Dan. 1:1f Mt. 1:20 Dt. 13:2
 - 1. Even in the Bible dreams are very rare.
 - 2. Most dreams have no particular meaning. Ecc. 5:7
 - 3. False interpretations are destructive. Jer. 23:16 27:9
- B. Wait patiently upon the Lord. Isa. 40:30-31 55:8-9 Rom. 8:18 Ps. 37:7 Prov. 3:5-6
 - 1. You will experience trials and delays. 37:2 41:46
 - 2. God uses hardship to prepare you for future responsibility. Js. 1:2-4 Heb. 12:11
 - 3. Faithfully serve God where He has you. Mt. 25:23 Phil. 4:11 Pr. 22:29
 - 4. The glory that awaits you will cause you to forget the present suffering. Rom. 8:18 Rev. 21:4 22:3,5 John 15:19 Phil. 1:29 II Ti. 3:12 I Pe. 4:12-19
 - 5. This applies to the original readers who were afflicted in Egypt. Ex. 1:7,12
- C. Put your trust in God, not men. Jer. 17:5-8 Mt. 6:11 Ps. 20:7 Phil. 4:19 Isa. 2:22 26:3
 - 1. God is sovereign over all rulers, history, creation, and the economy. Pr. 21:1 Eph. 1:11 Is. 40:15 46:10 45:7
 - 2. He will never forget you. Heb. 6:10 13:5 Deut. 31:6 Isa. 49:15
 - 3. Fearlessly proclaim God's truth. I Pe. 4:11 Ps. 119:146 II Tim. 4:1f I Cor. 2:2
- D. Imitate the godly wisdom Joseph exemplifies. Proverbs 1-31
 - 1. He avoids the immoral woman. Prov. 5-7
 - 2. He fears God, but not man. Pr. 29:25 1:7
 - 3. He plans and prepares for the future. Pr. 21:5 6:6-11
 - 4. He patiently endures, trusting God. Prov. 3:5-6
 - 5. He is not vengeful. Pr. 20:22
 - 6. He is tactful and sensible. Pr. 25:15,11
 - 7. He exemplifies the characteristics of a wise ruler. Pr. 16:12 8:15-16

VI. Conclusion.

- A. How does this passage point to Christ?
 - 1. Jesus is the True Prophet upon whom God's Spirit rests, the Revealer of God's mysteries, and Wisdom Personified. Dt. 18:15-19 Is. 11:1-3 He. 1:1f Jo.1:1f Co. 1:15f Prov. 8:1f I Cor. 1:30-31
 - 2. He is astonishingly elevated by God from the lowliest place to the highest place. Acts 5:30-31 Phil. 2:5-11 Isa. 53:2-3,12 52:13 Rev. 12:1-5
 - 3. All must show Him homage. Ps. 2:12 Gen. 41:40 41:43 Phil. 2:10-11
 - 4. He is the Savior of the world to whom all must go to receive the bread of life. Isa. 55:1f John 6:35,51
 - 5. Other parallels. 40:6-7 41:46 Mt. 9:36 Heb. 5:8 41:46 Lu. 3:23
- B. God has revealed your future. Heb. 9:27 Rom. 6:23
- C. You can be elevated from your present lowly state. Isa. 61:10

Discussion questions

1. What were God's purposes in the *detours* in Joseph's life?
2. What detours and disappointments are you experiencing?
What might God be doing?
3. Does this passage teach that you should expect God to reveal things to you in dreams?
Explain your answer.
4. How are Joseph and Daniel similar?
5. Why does Pharaoh elevate Joseph?
6. What should you do if you feel imprisoned by your circumstances in life?
7. What principles of wisdom are exemplified in Joseph's life?
8. How does this passage point to Christ?