

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 16th October 2022

Rev Philip Knowles Ps/Hymns Ps 146:1-6 Tune how deep the Father's love, 228, 300

Read: Genesis 40:1-8 Text Genesis 40:1-22

Series: Joseph (35) Title: Joseph a Faithful Messenger.

When the chief Butler and Baker offended King Pharaoh, they were imprisoned with Joseph.

One night both the Butler and Baker dreamed a dream, which left them sad, the reason being **verse 8** states "**there is no interpreter of it...**" they didn't know what the dream meant and there was no one to explain the message of the dream.

However, God had His servant Joseph in the right place at the right time. In **verse 8** "**Joseph said unto them do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.**"

The dreams were messages from God.

At this time scripture was not given in its complete written form as we have today! Therefore, God spoke through dreams, but the focus was not the dream itself but the message in the dream.

Today, we have the complete scriptures of truth in its written form. All that God will say to you, is found in His written word.

God had placed Joseph in prison for such a time at this.

In every sense of the word, we can say that Joseph fulfilled the role of prophet, as a faithful messenger.

While this office is not directly stated of Joseph, yet it is there because He interprets dreams, He prophesies of things to come.

The OT prophet was one who spoke for God to men.

In that sense he was the representative of God, the ambassador of God, going forth to deliver the message that God purposed to be delivered.

The OT prophet was to faithfully speak God's message, for this was the command given by God to the prophet Jeremiah in **Jeremiah 23:28** "*... he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.*

For this reason, God's faithful prophets did so, and as a result they were persecuted, put in jail, many martyred, as Christ said in **Luke 11:49** "*I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:*

Remember Joseph is being persecuted because he told the message of his own dreams to his brothers, that one day he will be exalted, and they will bow before Him, also, He refuses to act in wickedness against God.

Now in prison, Joseph will interpret the dream of the Butler and Baker, telling forth God's message concerning each man.

No matter if Joseph was in the field, Shechem, Dothan, Egypt, prison, he never failed in representing the Saviour.

His whole life centre upon a redemptive purposes, God's plan to save a people.

Once again we look to Christ, God's perfect and Final prophet, as He came into this world.

Christ never failed in representing the Father who had sent Him.

The Shorter Catechism the answer to **Q24** – How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet? “*Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by His word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.*”

Christ’s work as prophet belongs to the entire purpose of redemption, God’s will for our salvation.

As the Prophet of the everlasting covenant of redemption, Christ reveals to sinners God’s terms for their salvation.

All that Christ says as Prophet revolves around that central theme.

I FIRST, THE SOURCE OF THE MESSAGE

when Joseph is told from the men that they had dreamed dreams, and there was *no interpreter of it...*” Joseph points the men Godward.

Joseph responds with a Rhetorical question, that means a question where the answer is clear, the statement made is obvious, *Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God?....*”

Joseph gives all honour and glory to God.

The dream with its message belongs to God. He knows the future; He has planned everything, in His eternal, infinite and unchanging wisdom.

God said through the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 46:9-10 “*For I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

Joseph is saying to the Butler and Baker, there is a God in heaven, who is the source of the message because its His message to give.

Joseph continues in his answer, ***tell me them, I pray you***, and then each tell Joseph their dreams.

But here is the vital point, Joseph in interpreting their dreams does so based on what God gave them in the dream.

Joseph does not go outside the context or boundaries of the dream, why because it would no longer be God's message but Joseph's message.

(Paul said in **1 Corinthians 4:1-2**, concerning ministers of the Lord ***"it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."***)

Joseph interprets only what God has given.

The same occurred in the life of Daniel.

In **Daniel 2**, when **King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams.**

He turned to human wisdom to interpret the dream, but none could, for we read in **verse 10-11** ***"The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean."*** ***there is none other that can shew it before the king***

Daniel said in **verse 28** ***"there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.***

It was God who made known the message of the dream and it was the message that Daniel delivered, the same with Joseph.

We think of Christ, He said in **Luke 24:27** ***“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself***

Therefore, the preacher of the gospel, as he presents God to men for their salvation and sanctification, he does so, as Paul said to make Christ known.

We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus.

Paul opens the OT scriptures as Philip, and preaches Jesus, the suffering servant. Like Paul, Joseph must answer, ***For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.***

men and woman, learn in our evangelism, the message does not come from the church, a creed, or human skill, rather its source is God Himself.

Sin renders men and woman spiritually blind, their understanding darkened. God must reveal Himself to men if they are to be saved

When God’s word is communicated, read or preached, it is God speaking, He has a message for you, for some as in the case of Butler and Baker, it will be a savour of life unto life and to others a savour death into death.

God has a message for you today, that’s why He brought you here.

II SECOND, THE SUBSTANCE OF THE MESSAGE

What was the message in the dream?

It's clear the Butler and Baker did not understand the message in the dream for they said in **verse 8** "*there is no interpreter of it...*"

However, in the providence of God, He has sovereignly placed Joseph in the midst. Its not a mistake that Joseph is in prison nor these two men.

They needed the interpretation and an interpreter to understand the message in the dream.

Again, please notice, when the Butler and Baker tell Joseph their dreams, **Joseph is faithful, in that Joseph gives the substance of the message, the exact meaning.**

Joseph was God's instrument. By divine guidance Joseph was enabled to present the vision as the Butler and Baker had seen it. Furthermore, he was enabled to give the meaning of it.

Upon examination the substance of the message as communicated by the dream was of one life and death.

one of restoration and ruination, one of pardon and punishment.

It was a message of things to come, a message where both men would stand before Pharaoh, one to be rewarded and other to sentenced to death.

Joseph must be faithful, because Joseph understood by God giving him wisdom that the Butler would live but the Baker would die.

To tell the Butler you will live and then the next minute to tell the Baker you will die, was not pleasant but it required faithfulness to God's message.

Notice the Butler's Dream and Deliverance from verses 9-13.

Now I will not really comment on these words because they are straightforward *"In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; ¹⁰ And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: ¹¹ And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. ¹² And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days:¹³ Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler*

The message to the Butler **was life, restoration, and reward.**

Notice the Baker's Dream and Death. from verses 16-19 *I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head: ¹⁷ And in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head. ¹⁸ And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days: ¹⁹ Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.*

The message to the Baker was **Death, Destruction, Damnation.**

In considering the message to the Butler and Baker, there is the pattern for preaching Christ in all the scriptures, because

the message of the Bible, speaks of both life and death, Pardon and Punishment.

Every preacher, believer must preach, share both the message of the butler and the message of the baker if God's message is to be faithfully delivered.

The preacher in faithfulness brings to your attention such truths. He does so because he cares for your soul.

Likewise believer as you share the gospel, you must be faithful in your witness, not just about heaven, forgiveness, love, mercy, grace.

But also there is hell, judgement, justice, wrath.

We learn from the greatest preacher, and prophet who ever lived, that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Read the sermons of Christ and you see words of life and death presented to his hearers.

For instance, in His sermon on the mount recorded from **Matthew 5-7**, we read in **Ch 7:13-14** ***Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there: ¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*** The Saviour speaks to two gates, two destinations, He is speaking about Hell and heaven. His sermon includes life and destruction.

You see your soul is eternal, therefore the soul will either live in the majesty of heaven, or live in the misery of hell.

Your eternal soul will either enjoy heaven's praise or endure hell's punishment.

It's interesting to see that both the Butler and Baker stand before Joseph. Their end is known to Him. He sees one restored and the other to ruination.

Oh! do you see the gospel picture of our greater Joseph the Lord Jesus Christ and how people stand before Him.

It is a message of separation! Right now, this message is either life to you or death.

Let me ask as I preach the message of the Bible to you, how do you stand before Christ now?

Oh maybe there is some like the Baker, after he heard the Butler would live, **verse 16** states *he saw that the interpretation was good... no doubt he wanted to hear the same good news.*

People today only want to hear what is good, Jesus is love, there is heaven, but to speak about sin, hell, eternal separation they want it left out.

The baker presents the sinner, who wants the preacher, to be like the prophets in **Israel 30:10** to prophesy only "**smooth things**". Speak of love and laughter.

Many in England, call upon preachers, as in the days of Amos, in **Amos 7:13** "**prophesy not again any more**"

Unsaved one take Christ's words **Enter ye in at the strait gate** meaning enter into life, and believer only the truth of scripture will set sinners free, so keep sharing scripture.

III THIRD, THE SURENESS OF THE MESSAGE

When Joseph gave the interpretation, delivering the message **verse 12 & 18** "**This is the interpretation of it** those word are sure words, certain.

There is uncertainty, no guessing, no personal opinion, worst case scenario, or just wait and see, it may not turn as such.

Rather Joseph is stating with sureness, here is the message and here is what is going to happen, by God's word.

Verses 20-22 *And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. ²¹ And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: ²² But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them*

What Joseph said ***came to pass*** on a certain day at a certain time.

When God had accomplished His purpose with the Butler and Baker in prison, opening the way for Joseph's exaltation in Egypt, they were called upon.

All what Joseph told them, happened. The Butler was restored, but the Baker died.

Joseph demonstrated he was a faithful prophet, as **Jer 28:9** states "***when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him***"

Again, see the gospel, listen to Christ, **John 3:16** ***whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Luke 13:3&5 except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.***

Remember the two men in **Luke 16** a certain rich man, and Lazarus. Lazarus died and entered into heaven, but the rich man died went to hell's torments.

The greatest comfort we have believer in the words and ministry of Christ throughout the gospels are verified in **1**

Corinthians 15:3-4 “how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the *THIRD* day according to the scriptures.

This sureness of comfort and truth to the believer, we are sure of life, sure to be in Christ's presence as Saviour.

but to you unsaved this sureness of condemnation and torments, to be in Christ's presence as Judge.

Oh sinner be sure, ask Christ to save you today He will.