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Studies in Genesis

(Leaflet 28)

JOSEPH—A TYPE OF CHRIST (Cont'd.)

A SERVANT—FALSELY ACCUSED—IMPRISONED

Genesis 39:1—40:23; cf. 38:1-30

As we continue our study of Joseph, a type of Christ, we see this beloved son of his father, having been rejected by his brethren, suffering at the hands of the Gentiles. The closing verses of chapter thirty-seven tell us that he was sold to the Ishmaelites and Midianites, later to be bought by Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard. All of these were Gentiles. In our lesson today we pick up the threads of this story, and read on to find Joseph a servant in Egypt, falsely accused, imprisoned, all the while bearing a faithful testimony to the God of his fathers, being used of Him to bless those whom he served.

It is a wonderful picture of the Lord Jesus, who, after He was rejected by His brethren, the Jews, was delivered unto the Gentiles, suffering at their hands, even as He became a blessing to the whole world. Of His suffering in Gentile hands, David wrote a striking prophecy in the second Psalm, quoted by Peter and John and other believers in their prayer, recorded in Acts 4:25-28:

"... Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Our Lord was a faithful Servant of Jehovah, ministering in a godless world, of which Egypt was a type. He was

falsely accused, imprisoned, led to the judgment hall, suffering as none other has ever suffered or ever will suffer. Rejected by the Jews, He was crucified on a Roman—Gentile—cross; and that is why He is the Saviour of the world. The sins of Jews and Gentiles sent Him to that shameful death—your sins and mine, my friend.

The thirty-ninth and fortieth chapters of Genesis, as well as the four which follow immediately, tell us what befell Joseph during the time of his rejection by his brethren, and are a picture of what our Lord has been doing in this age, which had its beginning at the cross. Christ is still rejected by Israel, and is being offered to the Gentiles as a Saviour. The day will come when He will reveal Himself once more to His brethren of the house of Israel. Then they who sold Him will rejoice in their Deliverer. Joseph's exaltation in Egypt and his making himself known to his brethren after he had preserved them in time of famine, completes in type this wonderful picture of our coming Lord. Did not the Holy Spirit say, in I Cor. 10:6, that "these things happened as types for us"? (See marginal rendering.) What things? The experiences of Israel in the wilderness, under the leadership of Moses. Likewise, the strange events in the life of Joseph "happened as types for us," to portray the Person and work of the Greater than Joseph, Israel's Messiah and the Saviour of the world.

JUDAH'S SHAMEFUL SIN

Before we continue this story of Joseph in Gentile hands, we need to pause for the parenthetical chapter that the Holy Spirit has placed in Gen. 38:1-30. It interrupts the beautiful story of Joseph's life; and yet it was not put here by chance. There is a divine purpose in everything that has to do with the inspired Word of God, even to the arrangement of chapters and the order of books. And the sad, shameful story of Judah's sin comes just here for reasons known to God. To us it seems that one purpose in this is to show us something of His grace, His lowliness, in humbling Himself, making Himself "of no reputation," coming to earth through the line of Judah, one of Jacob's wicked sons. Indeed, the holy Son of God could find no sinless family, through which to

manifest Himself to the world! That is why He was born of the virgin; for He was the sinless Son of God, as well as the perfect Son of Man. Because He was "the only begotten Son" of the Father, born of the Spirit of God, He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26). Because He was perfect Man, He could die for us. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

The Bible tells us repeatedly that the Lord Jesus came through the tribe of Judah. In Gen. 49:10 Jacob prophesied that "the sceptre" should "not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh come." To David, of the line of Judah, the righteous King was promised (II Sam. 7:16). Through Joseph, "the husband of Mary," Christ received the *legal* right to David's throne; and Joseph came from the family of Judah (Matt. 1:3). Through Mary our Lord received the *natural* right to the throne of David; and Mary came through Judah's tribe (Luke 3:33). In Rev. 5:5, 6 we read that "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" is none other than "the Lamb" that was slain, even "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Only the grace of God led Him so to humble Himself. There was a flood-tide of sin flowing through the family of Jacob. The time came when he told his older sons that they had brought shame upon him, that everyone would despise him for what they had done. And now Judah fell into disgrace and dishonor. How could God deal with such sinners? How could He bring out of a sinful family a nation that would give to the world Christ and the Bible? Is there any glory for Christ in His being called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah"? Only because He is the God of all grace. How can God take from the mire poor, outcast men and women, crimson in their sin and shame, and make them His own children? Only through His matchless grace! And again we want to emphasize the fundamental truth that the infinitely Holy One, coming into the world through the tribe of Judah—or through any other tribe—had to be born of the virgin. We must never lose sight of this all-important fact.

And now let us turn to the thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis, and read its sad story silently; it is not one we care to discuss, so shameful and vile are its contents. It stands in striking contrast to the record in the next chapter of Joseph's chaste life, even through the most satanic temptation. And here again we see the type delineated further; for Judah represents Israel; whereas Joseph foreshadows our blessed Lord, who withstood every temptation from Satan without the least stain of sin upon Him! It was Judah who suggested to his brethren that they sell Joseph; he stands here as their representative.

His sad story pictures Israel's condition during this time of her rejection of her Messiah. She is wandering among the Gentiles, mingling with them, even as Judah had three sons by Shuah, the woman of Canaan. Tamar's sordid experience but adds further guilt to Judah's cup of iniquity. And all this while Joseph was away from his brethren, even as Israel's rejection of her Messiah in this age is during His absence from the earth. Surely it is not mere speculation to say that herein is another reason why the Holy Spirit placed this tragic story exactly in this chapter, immediately following Joseph's rejection by his brethren and during his absence from their midst!

The meaning of the names of this "certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah," and of her sons adds further light to this prophetic picture of Israel's condition during the absence of her rejected Lord. "Canaanite" means "merchant-man"; "Shuah," "riches"; "Er," "enmity"; "Onan," "iniquity"; "Shelah," "a sprout." "And he was at Chezib when she bare him"; "Chezib" means "false." What a picture of the Jewish nation during this age of her Messiah's absence from the earth! A merchant people; wedded to riches, as it were; at enmity with the Christ of God; practising the iniquity of the godless Gentiles, among whom they dwell; "a sprout," with "feeble life, yet preserved by God," in spite of the false prophets who have blinded their eyes! Surely these names are suggestive of the condition that has prevailed in the house of Jacob ever since the beloved Son of the Father was thrust out of the world at the point of a spear!

JOSEPH—A SERVANT IN POTIPHAR'S HOUSE

The first verse of chapter thirty-nine tells the same story as does the last verse of chapter thirty-seven, that Joseph became a servant in the house of Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard. Thus the narrative continues from the point where we left it in our last lesson. The captain of the king's guard was the executioner of state criminals, an official of the government of Egypt. And as a servant in this officer's house, Joseph was being trained by the Lord for a very high government position at Pharaoh's court in the years to come.

The life that is committed to God for guidance and training and service finds that "all things work together for good" to him who loves the Lord. (See Rom. 8:28.) How often the perplexed child of God wonders at seemingly adverse circumstances, apparently insurmountable difficulties, only to learn in after years that these very circumstances and difficulties were most necessary to the performance of some God-given task.

Joseph, being human, must have wondered why he was called to suffer bondage—for he was a bond-slave. He must have wondered why life seemed so cruel, why he was betrayed by his own near kinsmen, sold for a servant, and taken to a heathen country, far from the father he loved. But if Joseph wondered about these things, there is not the slightest intimation that he questioned the providence of God. On the contrary, his testimony in Potiphar's house, in the prison, at Pharaoh's court, and before his own brethren gives abundant evidence that he trusted fully in the Lord to guide and keep, no matter what the test.

In becoming a bond-slave in Egypt, Joseph pictures the ministry of Christ in a godless world, as the faithful Servant of Jehovah. At His incarnation the eternal God left His Father's house, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

"Being in the form of God," He "thought it not robbery (i. e., 'a thing to be grasped after') to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and

took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8).

At His incarnation the prophecy of Zech. 3:8 was fulfilled concerning the coming into the world of God's faithful Servant. As the Lord Jesus "went about doing good" throughout His earthly ministry, washing His disciples' feet, having nowhere to lay His head, giving comfort and eternal life to the outcast and the down-trodden, He was the "faithful witness" to the sacrificial love of the Triune God. It must have been a sore trial for Joseph to go from his father's home in the land of promise, to become a servant in pagan Egypt. But at how much greater cost did the eternal God become a lowly Servant in a thankless world! He was the Creator, yet despised and rejected by His creatures. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11).

"THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH"

Verses 2-6 of this thirty-ninth chapter of Genesis tell a wonderful story of God's presence with Joseph, the servant; and of His blessing upon the labors of his hands, as well as upon the house of the Egyptian for Joseph's sake. This Hebrew lad was among heathen; yet "the Lord was with him, and he was a prosperous man." He did not secretly worship the God of his father, for "his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." Doubtless it was not easy to witness a good profession before a pagan people; Satan always sees to it that it is very hard to do. Joseph could have been a faithful servant, humanly speaking, without letting the Egyptians know of his God. But then he would not have been faithful to his Lord. And he wanted his testimony to glorify the God in whom he trusted. Like Daniel, centuries later, he was not afraid to stand alone in his worship of the true and living Lord. And surely there must be Egyptians in heaven today because of Joseph's witness to the only Saviour of sinners.

The lesson to us is plain. It is not always easy to bear testimony to Christ among ungodly friends or loved ones, in

the office or shop, wherever our work may lead us. But if our love for Christ is going to mean anything for His glory, we must be like Joseph, glad to witness for Him before men, angels, and demons.

“And Joseph found grace in his (Potiphar’s) sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.”

Thus God honored Joseph’s testimony. Sometimes the godless world is not attracted to us, because we do not show forth Christian graces. We do not always let the joy of the Lord radiate from our lives. But Joseph must have been so consistent in his life, so faithful to his God, that people loved him. It is also true that sometimes Satan stirs up bitter enemies against even the most godly. The Lord permits some of His most devoted saints to suffer persecution. But God forbid that we should let any selfishness or criticism or inconsistencies in our lives hinder us from finding grace in the eyes of those who are looking to us to represent our Lord, whose name we bear.

“And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph’s hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.”

“The Lord blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake.” What a testimony! The story is told of a skeptical man who dared anyone to take a Bible into his home. He had a little daughter, whom he watched to see that no one told her the stories about Jesus. The child’s mother was dead, and she was not to hear the Gospel message if her father could help it. But one day he hired a Negro cook, a dear child of God; and, unknown to her employer, she took into that home the sacred Scriptures. Needless to say, she told the little girl of the Lord Jesus Christ, reading to her the wonderful stories from the Word of God.

The girl grew to be sixteen years of age before she became a Christian—so long had she been denied the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. But through the faithful witness of that Negro cook, she took the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour. When she told her father of her new joy, he was enraged, and gave her twenty-four hours in which to choose between renouncing her faith or leaving the home. The girl spent the night in prayer before packing her bag to go on the following day. When she went to the living room and toward the front door that morning, she bade her father farewell. He was seated by the fireside, his head bowed in his hands. Then she asked that before leaving she might play just once more upon the piano. She sat down and sang to her own accompaniment that beautiful hymn of Frances Ridley Havergal,

"Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee."

She arose and started to go; whereupon the father broke into tears, and said, "Stay, my child, and tell me how to find your Saviour." That Negro servant had brought blessing into that godless home; and two never-dying souls were saved—saved to serve, and to lead yet others to the Christ of Calvary.

Joseph's testimony must have been like that. His master trusted him utterly, even with his money. And God had blessed Joseph with a personality and appearance, of which it could be said that he was "a goodly person, and well favoured."

As we follow the analogy between Joseph and the Lord Jesus, we see at least four beautiful truths concerning the "altogether lovely" One. As Joseph "was a prosperous man" in his master's house, even so it was written of Jesus, the Servant of Jehovah, that "the pleasure of the Lord" should "prosper in his hand" (Isaiah 53:10). Potiphar was pleased with the service of his Hebrew slave, a picture of what our Lord meant when He said to the Jews, "The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29). "The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake"; and the blessing of salvation has come to the world for Christ's sake. Because He gave His life,

"a ransom for many," multitudes have been saved for His name's sake. "Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured," a prophetic picture of the One whose sinless life was "altogether lovely." None could find fault with Him. Little children were drawn to Him. He was the holy Son of God.

JOSEPH'S VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION

Again we must read silently the record of the wickedness and intrigue of Potiphar's wife in her vain attempts to cause Joseph to commit a great sin. Her story is like that of many of the women of ancient Egypt, as evidenced by the records of the monuments. But Joseph refused to be seduced by her wiles. He told her of his responsibility to his master, who trusted him fully; and, above all, of his obligation to his God. His testimony to the Lord was wonderful,

"How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Not even any of Joseph's fathers had uttered such words of courage and faith, when under temptation, as these that fell from his lips. Three times this woman's vain attempts are recorded, and the third time Joseph fled from her and her satanic devices.

It is a remarkable foreshadowing of our Lord's three-fold temptation by Satan, except that the devil left the Lord Jesus; Christ did not flee from Satan. "In all things" He must "have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). Joseph might have received honors at the hands of the wife of a government official; but he resisted temptation, fleeing from it rather than sin against his master and against God. Likewise, Satan offered our Lord power and the kingdoms of this world; but the Creator of all things did not have to take these things on Satan's terms; nor could He, for He was without sin. "The word of the Lord tried" Joseph (Psalm 105:19); and Jesus answered Satan each time by the Word of God. The Lord permitted this severe temptation to Joseph, in order to prove his faith in God, and to help to complete the prophetic picture of our Lord's temptation and His holy, sinless life. He could not sin because He was God. His

temptation is one of the infallible proofs of His deity. "He was in all points tempted like as we are, sin apart" (Heb. 4:15, R. V.). Because He was tempted, He is the sympathetic Son of Man, who can "be touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. 4:15). Because He could not sin, He is our sufficient Saviour, our God.

Two other thoughts present themselves as we wonder why the Lord permitted this severe temptation of Joseph. In the first place, with God-given courage and steadfastness and chastity, this young Hebrew was being strengthened for a very great service in a very responsible position. We do not grow strong without testings. Difficulties are overcome by facing them and rising above them by the grace of God. This trial was a part of Joseph's schooling for a remarkably useful life in God's service. And was it not the prison that led to the second place in the kingdom?

Again, it seems that Satan was attempting to destroy the testimony of Joseph. He has tried countless times to destroy God's people, Israel; and he was afraid of the sons of Jacob. He tried in many ways to destroy the line, through whom the promised "seed" should come. But in that Satan was fighting against God. For some reason known to God He permitted such satanic attempts, in order to prove to men, angels, and demons that His covenant promise with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would be fulfilled to the very letter. Part of that covenant has already been fulfilled; and "every jot and tittle" will literally come to pass, even as the inerrant Word of God has said.

JOSEPH FALSELY ACCUSED

Out of the iniquity of her wicked heart, Potiphar's wife sought revenge upon Joseph by one of the most contemptible falsehoods ever conceived. So great was her chagrin at being defeated in her evil designs that she spoke contemptibly to her servants of her own husband, saying, "See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us." She was blaming Potiphar, so great was her rage.

The accusation she made against Joseph stirs up our indignation; it was so unjust. Yet how much more unjust and wicked and satanic were the false accusations brought against our sinless Saviour! The Jews even accused Him of blasphemy! They said He cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons, attributing His mighty works to satanic power! And here again Joseph becomes a prophetic picture of our blessed Lord.

JOSEPH IMPRISONED

It has been suggested that Potiphar doubtless knew the character of his wife; that the inspired record does not say against whom his "wrath was kindled"; that had he been convinced that Joseph was guilty of such a crime, he would have had him killed; and that he had to "take some action for appearance's sake." It was Potiphar, "the captain of the guard," who later put Joseph in charge of the king's butler and baker during their imprisonment. (See Gen. 40:4.) He may have kept Joseph there, in order to shield his own home from disgrace. And, of course, God's hand was in it all; for He had a plan for Joseph's life.

There is no record of Joseph's having attempted a defense; to do so would have incriminated the wife of his master. And what a foreshadowing of our Lord's patience under suffering!

"When he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (I Peter 2:23).

"He was taken from prison and from judgment . . . yet he opened not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7, 8).

How much physical pain Joseph suffered in prison we do not know; but our text tells us that he was put in "a place where the king's prisoners were bound." Joseph, too, was "bound"; for Psalm 105:17, 18 records these highly descriptive words:

". . . Joseph . . . whose feet they hurt with fetters:
he was laid in iron."

"BUT THE LORD . . . GAVE HIM FAVOUR IN THE SIGHT
OF THE KEEPER OF THE PRISON"

Whatever Joseph may have suffered in physical pain, discouragement, and undeserved calumny, he knew the presence and blessing and power of his God, even throughout all his affliction.

"The Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper" (Gen. 39:21-23).

It must have been a source of comfort and encouragement to Joseph that the prison keeper trusted him utterly. And again he was being trained for yet future service. He was a man who could be put in charge of real responsibilities. But it was God who gave him mercy and favor, first in the sight of Potiphar, and then with the jailer. Joseph was quick to give God all the glory. That is why ever-increasing mercy and grace could be bestowed upon him by his Lord.

Our Saviour did His greatest work after His brethren had refused Him as their Messiah. Having been sold by Israel, "despised and rejected of men," (Isaiah 53:3), He finished the work which He had come into the world to do; and salvation was offered to the Gentiles; yea, to all who would receive Him.

Moreover, just as the jailer trusted Joseph in the prison, so also those in authority, who crucified the Lord Jesus, had to admit His innocence; yea, His deity. Pontius Pilate said unto the Jews concerning Him:

"I find in him no fault at all . . . I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it" (John 18:38; Matt. 27:24).

And when the Roman "centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things

that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54).

Even in the prison the Lord made Joseph "to prosper." Today, in a German concentration camp, is another man of God whose testimony the Lord is making "to prosper." He is Pastor Niemoeller, that valiant soldier of the cross, who was driven from his pulpit, separated from his family, doubtless made to endure all the horrors of a German prison camp, because he would not deny his Lord. Some months ago it was said that he was permitted to see his wife for only a few minutes at a time once a month, and that in the presence of a German official. And just recently "The Sunday School Times" printed the statement that the prison authorities have to change his attendants every few days, in order to keep them from becoming Christian. What a testimony! This man of God, in the hour of his great affliction, may be doing the greatest work of his life. God knows. Certainly the Lord is with him; and He is making him "to prosper." So will He be with you, my Christian friend in great trial of affliction. He will prosper your service for His name's sake, if you are in His will.

"HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS"

In that graphic prophecy of the cross, found in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, we read that our Lord "was numbered with the transgressors" (verse 12). The fulfillment of these words, foretold seven-hundred years before He came into the world, took place when He was crucified between two thieves, one on His right hand, and one on His left. They were guilty of crime; our Lord was sinless. One was saved, even as he hung upon the cross; the other was lost.

"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto

him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:39-43).

This scene was strikingly foreshadowed when Joseph, cast into prison for a crime which he did not commit, was "numbered with the transgressors." Two of the king's servants were put into the ward with Joseph. What their offense was, we are not told; but perhaps they had disobeyed the king's orders. While they were in the prison, each dreamed a dream, "each man his dream in one night." God gave Joseph the interpretation of those dreams; and they came to pass, even "as Joseph had interpreted to them." One servant was saved; the other lost, humanly speaking; for one was restored to his place in the king's household; the other was hanged. Such an analogy is too remarkable to be a coincidence. This is but one of many details connected with the life of Joseph, which make him a type of our Lord Jesus.

THE MEANING OF THE DREAMS

We are familiar with the dreams of the chief of the king's butlers and the chief of his bakers, the two servants of Pharaoh who "had offended their lord the king of Egypt." On the morning following their dreams, Joseph "looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad." Joseph "served them"—himself a prisoner, yet serving others; and he was concerned over their sadness.

"And he asked Pharaoh's officers . . . saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you" (Gen. 40:7, 8).

Then it was that the butler told Joseph his dream. He saw a vine with three branches. "And it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes." The butler saw also Pharaoh's cup in his hand, even as he pressed the juice of the grapes into his king's cup, delivering it unto him. The three branches, Joseph told him, represented three days; and within those three days Pharaoh would restore him unto his

place as chief of the butlers. We are told that this was a position of high rank, for the king's cupbearer was overseer of the royal vineyards and cellars, probably supervising the work of hundreds under him.

It has been suggested that the juice of the grapes, pressed into the cup, was a picture of the precious blood of Jesus poured out for sinners. In our story it was a symbol of deliverance from the prison; the blood of Christ is the only means of redemption from sin unto everlasting life.

"When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head: 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. And Joseph answered and said . . . The three baskets are three days: 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" (40:16-19).

Thus Joseph was "the means of blessing to the butler, and a pronouncer of judgment upon the baker." And again we are reminded of the case of the two thieves who were crucified with the Lord Jesus. The baker was the king's cook. The bakemeats were the works of his hands; and the baskets were white. These are a picture of the best that we can do in our own self-righteousness, to make an offering unto the King of kings. No matter how hard we labor, no matter what we do in our own strength, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" in His sight with whom we have to do (Isaiah 64:6).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3:5, 6).

The baker saw in his dream the birds eating from the basket on his head, and Joseph interpreted this to mean that

they would eat the flesh of this servant of the king as his body was hanging on a tree. It is a horrible picture, yet a figure of the "curse" of sin. This man was under the curse of death; "for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13; Deut. 21:23). The fowls of the air, in the Scriptures, speak to us of evil spirits. Christ so applied them in the parable of the mustard tree, in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. Satan and all his hosts delight in robbing a man of his salvation; they find satisfaction in turning a soul away from God.

"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. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: but he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them" (40:20-22).

Thus Joseph's God-given interpretation concerning things that were to come to pass was literally fulfilled. And so will every prophecy of God's Word be fulfilled to the very letter. The Scriptures "cannot be broken" (John 10:35). Christ's assurance to the penitent thief on the cross meant everlasting life, even as His Word is sure concerning every one who, like the impenitent thief, refuses the way of the cross for eternal salvation. God's inerrant Word shall never pass away!

JOSEPH FORGOTTEN IN PRISON

After having told the butler the good news of his coming deliverance, Joseph said unto him:

"But think on me when it shall be well with thee and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon. . . . Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him" (40:14, 15, 23).

That seems to us a most ungrateful thing for the butler to do, not to remember Joseph; yet we must keep in mind that God was guiding in everything that concerned Joseph. "Two full years" were to pass (Gen. 41:1) before Joseph's God was going to give Pharaoh the dreams that should mean the exaltation of His faithful servant. God's time had not come; that is why the butler forgot Joseph.

As we think upon these things, as we realize that Joseph is a type of our suffering Saviour, we see another lesson for our own hearts. The butler's dream symbolized deliverance through the blood of Jesus. And Joseph asked to be remembered by this one he had befriended. The Greater than Joseph has done far more for every sinner saved by grace. He has shed His precious blood on Calvary's Cross, that we might be delivered from the shackles of sin and death. Before He went to that shameful cross, He told those who loved Him those never-to-be-forgotten words, "This do in remembrance of me." And He instituted what we call today "The Lord's Supper." The broken bread and the poured-out wine speak to us of His broken body and His shed blood "for the remission of sins." We would remember our Deliverer in this memorial feast—and at all times—even as we tell others of His redeeming love.

And that brings us to a very vital matter: The butler and the baker were sad when Joseph found them that morning, wondering what their destiny should be. Countless millions are sad today, "having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). God has given us the best news that human hearts can hear, the Gospel of our crucified and risen Lord Jesus. He has given to us the Holy Spirit to interpret its message to us, that we may pass it on to others who are yet sad, unsaved, in spiritual darkness. As we "remember Jesus," we "love to tell the story" of His eternal love.

But we must be willing to receive Him as the faithful Servant of Jehovah, falsely accused, imprisoned, crucified, before we can see Him as our risen, reigning Lord. Joseph's brethren rejected him; Joseph was a bond-slave, falsely accused, imprisoned, made to suffer bitterly. And Joseph was just a prophetic picture of Christ in His rejection and

humiliation and suffering. He bore the ignominy and shame, that He might become the Deliverer, not only of Israel, but also of the Gentile world—"whosoever will" look to Him for everlasting life. His own brethren, the Jews, rejected Him because He came as the lowly Servant of God; and, rejecting Him, they lost their own souls.

The story is told of a Russian nobleman who lived in the days when the Czars ruled that tragic country. This powerful noble wanted to present a costly gift to the man from among his serfs who would receive him graciously, even when he was disguised as a poor peasant. He attired himself in the garments of the poorest, and went from house to house within his domain. From many doors he was turned away with contempt. But at last he was received kindly into the home of a poor serf. The best that the humble cottage afforded was given to him with sincere kindness and hospitality. And then the nobleman went his way, still unknown to his benefactors. It was not long thereafter that he returned to present the costly gift. This time he was arrayed in his beautiful garments. And he bestowed the rich reward he had to offer.

This story speaks to us of the lowly Servant of Jehovah. When He came to earth the first time, He was born in a manger. He had "no form nor comeliness . . . there was no beauty that we should desire him" (Isaiah 53:2); for He had laid aside His royal robes of heavenly glory. But He was still God; and He had the most priceless gift in all the world to bestow upon all who would receive Him into their hearts as "the man of sorrows . . . despised and rejected of men." Many turned away from Him with contempt; others ignored Him and His precious gift of salvation.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

One day He is coming back in glory, wearing His heavenly robes, arrayed in all His beauty. And He will have rewards to present unto those who, like Joseph, have received Him into their hearts, and have served Him faithfully, even in prison and through persecution and trials manifold.

My friend, are you ready to meet Him? He is coming again. The time may be very short. "Now is the day of salvation." Let the lowly Man of Galilee enter your heart by faith; trust His cleansing blood; and you will share with Him His eternal glory which He had with the Father before the world was. (See John 17:5.)

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).