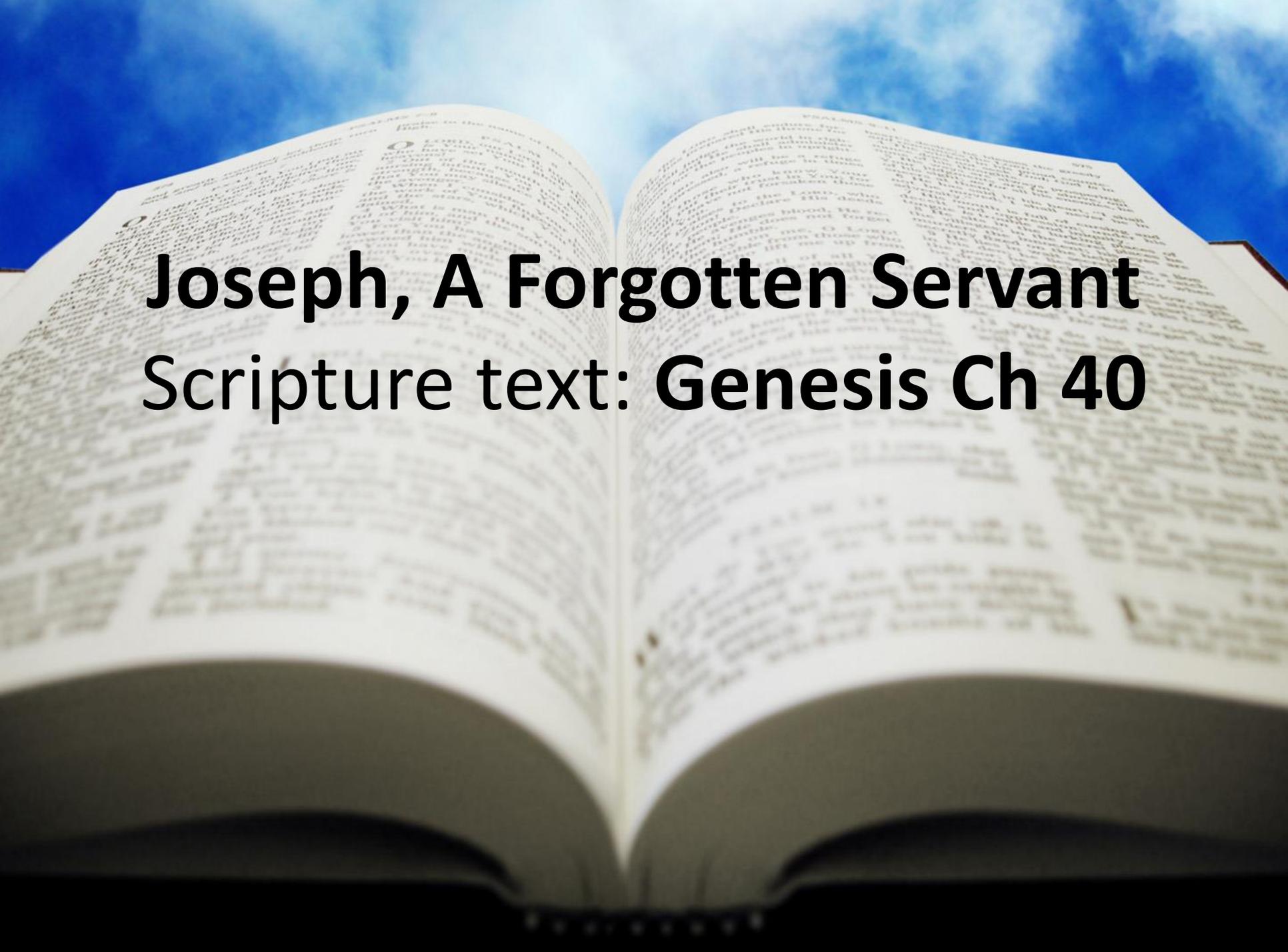


Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, but it is out of focus. The background is a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. The text is overlaid in a large, bold, black font.

Joseph, A Forgotten Servant
Scripture text: **Genesis Ch 40**

God used three disciplines in Joseph's life to prepare him to be the second ruler of Egypt:

A. The discipline of service (39:1–6).

B. The discipline of self-control (39:7–18).

C. The discipline of suffering (39:19–23).

The difficulty, is that our timing is not God's timing!
We want it NOW, yet God knows when we are ready to handle the burden. There are still lessons to learn.

Genesis 40:1-4 Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, and **he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard**, in the prison where Joseph was confined. **The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be with them, and he attended them. They continued for some time in custody.**

Joseph was now a servant in the royal prison, faithfully doing his work and waiting for the day when his prophetic dreams would come true. One day two new prisoners were added—the cupbearer to Pharaoh and the chief baker. What their crimes were is not stated; it may have been some minor thing that upset Pharaoh. However, we know that God arranged their arrest for Joseph's sake. Joseph had been treated unjustly, but **he knew that one day God would fulfill His Word.**

Verses 1–8.

In prison two servants of Pharaoh—his chief cupbearer and his chief baker—each had a troubling dream the same night.

Joseph noticed their sadness and agreed to interpret their dreams. **He understood their dreams to be from God and realized that God was beginning to work His will through two more dreams.**

Genesis 40:5-8 And one night they both dreamed-- the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison--each his own dream, and each dream with its own interpretation. When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "**Do not interpretations belong to God?** Please tell them to me."

Note Joseph's humility as he interpreted the two dreams (v. 8). **He gave all the glory to the Lord.**

"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Peter 5:6).

1 Peter 5:5-7 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "**God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.**" Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

The two prisoners were in bonds because of something they had done, while Joseph was innocent. **His interpretation of the dreams came true:** the cupbearer was restored, and the baker was hanged.

Yet Joseph was left in prison!

We may wonder why others experience the blessings that we so desperately need; yet God has His plan and His time.

Verses 9–15.

Joseph interpreted the dreams of the two servants of Pharaoh. The chief cupbearer's dream had a favorable interpretation. His dream reflected his profession, but with accelerated activity. The dream of the three vine branches of ripening grapes signified that Pharaoh would lift up the head of this man, that is, restore him to service within three days. To this, **Joseph added the request that the man remember him and seek his release from prison.**

There is a hint of discouragement and unbelief, however, in Joseph's request in v. 14. Was Joseph leaning on the arm of flesh? If so, the arm of flesh failed him, **for the butler completely forgot about Joseph for the next two years.**

This was a good lesson to Joseph **never to trust in men.** God was ultimately going to use the butler's bad memory to deliver Joseph, but the right time had not yet come. The butler forgot Joseph, but **God did not forget him!**

Verses 16–19. The dream of the baker was not favorable. His dream also reflected his profession, but in it birds were eating the bread he was carrying in three baskets on his head. To the disappointment of the baker, Joseph explained that Pharaoh would also lift up his head within three days, but it would be execution by hanging after which birds would eat his flesh.

Verse 20–23. The interpretations proved to be true, for in three days Pharaoh on his birthday ... restored the ... cupbearer but executed the baker. **Joseph, however, was forgotten in prison.**

Joseph was seventeen years old when he went to Egypt and thirty years old when he was delivered from the prison (Genesis 41:46).

This means he spent thirteen years as a servant and a prisoner, **years of discipline and training**, and **years of preparation for his lifelong ministry** as the second ruler of Egypt.

God prepares us for what He is preparing for us, if we will but yield to Him.

In many ways, Joseph is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, even though nowhere in the NT is he specifically called a type of Christ.

Joseph was a beloved son who was hated and rejected by His own brothers. They sold him for a slave and then one day met him as their king. Joseph had to suffer before he could enter into his glory.

He was victorious over temptation and yet arrested and treated unjustly.

Joseph was a faithful servant who ministered to others. Eventually he was exalted to the throne and was responsible for saving the nations.

His brothers did not recognize him the first time, but he revealed himself to them the second time they came to Egypt. **So it will be with Israel: they did not know Christ when He came the first time, but they will see Him when He comes again and will bow before Him.**