

TAKEAWAY

Joseph and the Triumph of Grace: Part 4

Genesis 40

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- To reflect on how God reveals Himself to us.
- To think about how we can be open to God's revelation in practical, wise ways

INTRODUCTION

Joseph was falsely accused by Potipher's wife and is imprisoned, an experience he describes as a 'pit' (or 'dungeon' in some translations - see Genesis 40:14). In this week's passage, we follow how Joseph behaves whilst in prison and his interpretation of the dreams of two other people imprisoned with him.

SHARE

Have you ever been blamed for something you didn't do? How did it make you feel?

How do you find hope and courage through a long season of disappointment or suffering?

Theologian J. I. Packer writes: *'One could reconstruct the God Joseph believed in by his behaviour in prison.'* From what we've observed of his life in Genesis so far, how would you describe Joseph's God? Does this surprise you?

How do you think Joseph was able to remain faithful to God despite limited understanding, history and experience of Him?

READ

Genesis 40:1-23

DISCUSS

What are the key moments in this passage? What does it tell us about Joseph? What does it tell us about God?

SHARE

How often do you remember any dreams you had during the night? Any interesting ones that you'd be comfortable to share?

Have you ever had a dream that you feel certain was from God? If so, is it something you can share?

DISCUSS

The chief baker's dream was bad news but the cupbearer's dream was good news. Joseph interprets each of the dreams faithfully - he does not try to make the dream sound 'nicer' for the unfortunate chief baker! Why is this vital to the integrity of his 'ministry'?

God speaks to us in different ways - but we must weigh everything in light of the overall message and story of scripture. However, scripture itself tells us that God reveals Himself in a range of ways.

In what ways does God speak and reveal Himself to you? Are you open to God speaking to you through a dream? What about God speaking to you through someone else's dream? Why so?

Although God can and does speak to people through dreams, what dangers might there be from relying on them? How can we sensibly understand dreams and discern whether they are from God or not?

In what ways does this story point us to Jesus?

PRAY

TRY OUT

Ask God to speak to you in a way you haven't particularly been open to previously. Note what happens over the weeks ahead. What is God saying you to at the moment?