

Joseph - A Rags to Riches Story

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 April 2014

Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

[0 : 00] Psalm 113, the Scottish Psalter, the tune is Irish. Praise God, servants of the Lord, O praise the Lord's name, praise.

Yea, blessed be the name of God from this time forth always. From rising sun to where it sets, God's name is to be praised. Above all nations God is high, above heavens his glory raised. And to the Lord our God that dwells on high, who can compare, himself that humble things to see in heaven and earth that are. He from the dust doth raise the poor, that very low doth lie. And from the dunghill lifts a man oppressed with poverty, that he may highly him advance. And with the princes set, with those that of his people are the chief, even princes great. And so on. We'll sing the whole psalm, Psalm 113, the tune is Irish. Praise God, ye servants of the Lord. Praise God, ye servants of the Lord.

[1 : 19] O praise the Lord's name, praise. Praise God, ye servants of the Lord.

Praise God, ye servants of the Lord.

glory raised unto the Lord and God that dwells on high who can compare himself and humble things to see in heaven and earth that I he from the dust of race of who a fairy Lord of life and from the dungeon lips of man oppressed with poverty that he may highly him advance and with the princess set with those that of his people are the chief in princess grave the bottom wound and house to keep he maketh land to peace of sons and mother full of joy praise to the Lord give thee let us bow in prayer Lord our God we pray that we might be led by your spirit in our worship that we might know that movement in our own heart where the Holy Spirit is guiding us in the right way we pray that we might have a spirit of worship recognizing that it is the living and true God that we do worship we pray that although we have a particular form of worship and that there is an aspect of it that is set out for us we pray that that won't in any way inhibit or bind us so that we do not have the freedom to express ourselves properly in worship seeking to give glory to God that our hearts might be lifted up you Lord are the one who sees our heart who knows what we're about who knows what we're thinking who knows the desires the deep rooted desires within us and we pray that the desire that is within our heart might be a desire to follow the Lord and to glorify him we give thanks oh Lord for your patience with us because we are slow to learn we are by nature disobedient there is within us so much that is sinful that distorts and takes us off track and causes us so many problems within our lives but we give thanks oh Lord for the desire that is set within our heart given by yourself where we seek to confess our sins seek to have our sins dealt with and where we come seeking that we will know that cleansing and forgiveness that is found in and through the Lord Jesus Christ and so we pray to bless us tonight and that as we come under the word that the word will indeed again challenge us and speak to us and that we will see Jesus in the word it doesn't matter where we are in the Bible we realize that ultimately it does speak to us in many ways about God's goodness and God's provision for us day by day we pray to bless us according to our own particular needs we are all individuals with our own challenges and opportunities in life we pray for those who face disappointments those Lord whose lives are not going the way they hoped the way they wanted and who are feeling cast down we pray to draw close to them and reveal your way and your will and that their heart might be eventually drawn in so that they will acquiesce with the will of

[7 : 07] God help us Lord to see that your ways are in the deep we so often will say these things lightly but often we are brought to places where we realize just how profound and how awesome these truths are and we pray Lord that we will have patience because we live in a very impatient world and we ourselves are impatient we always want things now grant us the grace Lord to wait and to realize that there is a time for everything under heaven and we pray oh Lord that we may realize that the Lord often waits that he might be gracious and that what appears to us the inactivity

of God is not always the inactivity of God that the Lord is often working in the silence and working when it appears to us that nothing is happening so Lord we pray that we will have that patience and that vision to see a bigger picture than just involves ourselves and to remember that without vision people perish and so Lord we pray that our hearts might be focused upon the Lord and that our vision will be widened so that we will see great things and we will see the hand of God working in mighty ways not only in our own lives but in the lives of others and in the life of the church at large and that we may have that spiritual vision that we'll see the hand of

God in everything we pray then to bless us tonight and pray for those who are mourning those whose hearts are sad and even although many days have gone by yet there is still the pain and the sorrow that is brought about through the loss of loved ones it will be a lifelong sorrow but we pray that in the sorrow there might even be rejoicing and we know Lord you are able to make the heart that was sad sing again and you're able to lift people up from the downhill and set them amongst the princes and so Lord we pray to bless and to prosper and to help each one pray for those who are ill and those who have undergone surgery and treatment those who are waiting for these things we pray to bless them all and we pray that as a great physician Lord that you will work so much so many who are ill at this time and we pray for healing realizing that the great physician is able to work mightily through means and even independently of means and so

Lord we ask that your hand will be displayed in might and power we ask Lord that we might indeed realize that this is another great opportunity that we have seeking to come to worship the living and through God speak to our hearts we pray open our eyes open our ears to see and to hear what God the Lord will speak we pray for all the different age groups and all the activities that go on within the congregation and we give thanks for the many things that do go on and we give thanks Lord for the willing and hearts and all those who help in so many different ways we pray to encourage your people in a dark day a spiritually dark day and we pray to bless our land we ask that many in this land who tonight are still in darkness will in the not too distant future come into the full light of the gospel we pray for our leaders and all who are in authority over us those in the royal household those in

Westminster those in Holyrood those in the council those Lord who have places of position and importance within our land who affect us our daily living we pray oh Lord to grant wisdom and guidance and we pray that even although people might not realize what they are doing that they will be directed in the right way Lord may your people be praying for those who are in authority over us so that we will experience peace within our land we pray to circle us with your arm and to protect us because we know that there are many who would seek to disrupt and many who would love to cause havoc and chaos and carnage within our land Lord we pray for the areas of this world where there are war where there are unrest where places sometimes at boiling point we ask oh Lord for restraint and we ask for deliverance for the places where there's oppression and bloodshed we pray for your church that is persecuted all over the world and we ask tonight for deliverance and for peace watch over us we pray be merciful to us and forgive us all our sin in

Jesus name Amen before we sing we're going to read part of Genesis chapter 41 it's quite a long chapter so we'll break it into two Genesis chapter 41 and we'll read the first part after two whole years that's after two years after we don't have time to read Genesis chapter 40 but in chapter 40 Joseph is as we know in prison he was in prison in Egypt for a long time and he interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker and this was after the release of the cup bearer or the butler as we might term him when Joseph had asked that the butler would or the cup bearer would remember him before

[13 : 05] Pharaoh and of course he forgot so that's after two whole years Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile and behold seven cows attractive and plump and they fed in the reed grass and behold seven other cows ugly and thin came up out of the Nile after them and stood by the other cows in the bank of the Nile and the ugly thin cows ate up the seven attractive plump cows and Pharaoh awoke and he fell asleep and dreamed a second time and behold seven ears of corn plump and good were growing on one stalk and behold after them sprouted seven ears thin and blighted by the east wind and the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump full ears and Pharaoh awoke and behold it was a dream so in the morning his spirit was troubled and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men Pharaoh told them his dream but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh then the chief cup bearer said to Pharaoh

I remember my offenses today when Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard we dreamed on the same night he and I each having a dream with its own interpretation a young Hebrew was there with us a servant of the captain of the guard when we told him he interpreted our dreams to us giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream and as he interpreted to us so it came about I was restored to my office and the baker was hanged then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph and they quickly brought him out of the pit and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes he came in before Pharaoh and Pharaoh said to Joseph I've had a dream and there is no one who can interpret it I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it Joseph answered Pharaoh it is not in me God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer then Pharaoh said to Joseph behold in my dream I was standing on the banks of the Nile seven cows plump and attractive came up out of the Nile and fed in the grass seven other cows came up after them poor and very ugly and thin such as I had never seen in all the land of Egypt and the thin ugly cows ate up the first seven plump cows but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had eaten them for they were still as ugly as at the beginning then I awoke I also saw in my dream seven years growing on one stalk full and good seven years withered thin and blighted by the east wind sprouted after them and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears and I told it to the magicians but there was no one who could explain it to me then Joseph said to Pharaoh the dreams of Pharaoh are one God has revealed to Pharaoh what he's about to do the seven good cows are seven years and the seven good ears are seven years the dreams are one the seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine it is as I told Pharaoh God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do there will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt but after them will arise seven years of famine and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt the famine will consume the land and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow for it will be very severe and the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God and God will shortly bring it about now therefore let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man and set him over the land of Egypt let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land and take one fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years and let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities and let them keep it that food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt so that the land may not perish through the famine Amen we'll continue reading after we sing in Psalm 30 from Sing Psalms Tunis and Minver Psalm 30 Sing Psalms it's on page 34 O Lord I will exalt your name for you have rescued me you did not let my foes rejoice and gloat triumphantly Lord God in need I cried to you and you restored my health O Lord you brought me from the grave and saved my soul from death and we sing on down to verse 8 but when you hid your face from me my heart was terrified to you O Lord I called aloud for mercy

[18 : 35] Lord I cried the tune of St. Minver Psalm 30 O Lord I will exalt your name O Lord I will exalt your name for you who have rescued me you did not let my foes rejoice and no triumphantly for God in need I cried to you and you restored my health joy O Lord you brought me from the grave and saved my soul from death you holy one sing to the

Lord sing out with joyful voice when you recrawled his holy name then praise him and rejoice his his anger but a moment last like all his favorite stings though tears may last throughout the night joy joy comes with morning's grace I never shall be moved by sand in my prosperity you made my mountain firm and strong when you

Lord favored me when you hid your face from me my heart was terrified to you O Lord I called the Lord for mercy Lord I cry I will continue reading pick up a reading at verse 37 Genesis 41 verse 37 Joseph has given the suggestion of what they should do with regard to the prospective famine so this proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants and

Pharaoh said to his servants can we find a man like this in whom is the spirit of God then Pharaoh said to Joseph since God has shown you all this there is none so discerning and wise as you are you shall be over my house and all my people shall order themselves as you command only as regards the throne will I be greater than you and Pharaoh said to Joseph see I have set you over all the land of Egypt then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck and he made him ride in

his second chariot and they called out before him bow the knee thus he set him over all the land of Egypt moreover Pharaoh said to Joseph I am Pharaoh and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt and Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphonath

Pania and he gave him in marriage Asenath the daughter of Potiphar priest of On so Joseph went out over the land of Egypt Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt and Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt earth produced abundantly and he gathered up all the food of these seven years which occurred in the land of Egypt and put the food in the cities he put in every city the food from the fields around it and Joseph stored up grain in great abundance like the sand of the sea until he ceased to measure it for it could not be measured before the year of famine came two sons were born to Joseph Asana the daughter of Potiphar priest of him bore them to him Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh for he said God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house the name of the second he called

[24 : 27] Ephraim for God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction the seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end and the seven years of famine began to come as Joseph had said there was famine in all the lands but in all the land of Egypt there was bread when all the land of Egypt was famished the people cried to Pharaoh for bread Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians go to Joseph what he says to you do so when the famine had spread over all the land Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt moreover all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain because the famine was severe over all the earth amen and may God bless to us this reading of his holy word going to sing again from sing psalm psalm 51 June is Ottawa psalm 51 page 67 oh my

God have mercy on me in your steadfast love I pray in your infinite compassion my transgressions wipe away cleanse me from iniquity wash my sin away from me for I know my own transgressions I can see my sinful plight you you only I have offended and an evil in your sight so your words are verified and your verdict justified and so on to verse 12 psalm 51 1-12 the tune is Ottawa oh my God have mercy on me oh my God have mercy on me in your steadfast love I pray in in your infinite compassion my transgressions wipe away cleanse me from iniquity wash my sin away from me for I know my own expressions I can see my sinful fight you you only I'm offended and uneven in your sight so for your words are terrified and you heard it justified from my birth I have been sinful such the nature I receive sinful from my first beginning in my mother's womb conceive truth you look for in my heart wisdom to me you impart cleanse with his of purify me

I be whiter than the snow let the fall to crush be joyful may I joy and gladness know from my figure I do face lot out all my wickedness Lord create a pure heart in me and a steadfast mind renew do not take your spirit from me as we are away from you give me back the joy

I have in my willing spirit life God I want us to think about this whole chapter because it is an amazing chapter.

[29 : 49] I suppose you could say the story of Joseph is the ultimate rags to riches where somebody is taken from the lowest point that you could really be in.

Joseph describes the person that he's in as a pit and he's taken straight to the palace. So that's what this chapter is really about. I'm not going to read but it just says at the beginning, after two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile.

Remember how Joseph's brothers had become very jealous of Joseph and they sold him to a band of Ishmaelites who were passing. Sold him for just a few pieces of silver and Joseph was then sold on in Egypt as a slave to this wealthy man, Potiphar.

Potiphar's wife told lies about Joseph and Joseph ended up in prison. And when he was in prison, of course, the prison guard, those in charge, recognized that he was a very fine man, gave him a wee bit of responsibility within the prison and Joseph, it was very obvious, was a very friendly man. And one day he came in and he found the Pharaoh's butler and baker. They were a wee bit upset. They had a dream and he and Joseph interpreted these dreams.

[31 : 14] But, of course, if we see back in chapter 40 in verse 8, why are your faces downcast today? They said to him, we have had dreams and there is no one to interpret them.

Joseph said to them, do not interpretations belong to God. Please tell them to me. And the great faith on the part of Joseph because he recognized that the Lord could indeed reveal to him the meaning of these dreams.

But it was also very God-glorifying. We find that Joseph, despite all that has happened to him, has never, ever stopped speaking about God and exalting God, even although he was a forgotten man. And, of course, Joseph interprets the dreams and he interprets them accurately. And in three days, the cupbearer, Pharaoh's cupbearer, was released and restored to his former position. But as he was going from the prison, he says to Joseph, Joseph said to him, to remember him. That's what it tells us in verse 14.

[32 : 22] He says, Only remember me when it is well with you and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh and so get me out of this house. For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit.

And so the cupbearer, the butler, he was released and restored to his former position. But, unfortunately, he forgot all about Joseph.

Here was this man and when Joseph told him the dream, interpreted the dream, that man's heart was filled with gratitude and he thought so much of Joseph. But, you know, it's extraordinary how quickly we can forget the good that has been done to us.

And here this man, Joseph, did so much good to him, he befriended him in prison and yet as soon as the butler is back out and he's back into his normal work, Joseph is a forgotten memory.

He's just gone right to the very back of his thinking. And written large over that is this ingratitude. And, unfortunately, that is so much part and partial of life and particularly our ingratitude before God because so often God has helped us.

[33 : 39] And I'm sure all of us can look back at times in our lives when we were going through personal difficulties, when we went through things that were really hard and we asked the Lord to help us and he did.

Maybe he didn't help us the way we wanted but as we look back, we cannot but see his hand, see his grace, see and appreciate his help.

And we, we afterward, we would say to the Lord, I will never forget the Lord. I will never forget. But, you know, as time goes on, sadly, we often do.

And I think it's one of the things that the Bible highlights so often is people's ingratitude to God. And that is why, it's one of the things that is spoken about so often in the Bible is for us to remember to thank the Lord.

Continually, we're being told that, to thank the Lord. It's like, remember when Jesus healed the ten lepers? Only one came back and Jesus asked, one came back to thank Jesus and Jesus said, and where are the nine?

[34 : 52] Did I not heal ten? And only one, a Samaritan, has come back to give thanks. And I'm sure that there are many, many times that the Lord is saying exactly the same thing.

Where are all the others who haven't come back to give thanks? Well, we have kind of a picture of that here. But anyway, God is in control of everything.

And Joseph has two more years to go in prison. What's that? About 730 days and nights. Languishing in that pit.

That was a long time. He had already been in for years. And still, another two years. And I'm sure there were many times that Joseph, well, it's not I'm sure, we know that Joseph, Joseph struggled. And one of the things that was so difficult for Joseph is that he had God's promise of exaltation. Because we're told in the book of Psalms, it tells us that until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him.

[36 : 05] That was speaking about Joseph. And remember, when Joseph was a young boy, he had been given dreams, given these dreams by God, of exaltation, of people bowing, his father and his brothers bowing down to him and all that.

And here he is in a foreign land, stuck in prison. The fulfillment of that promise seemed like 100,000 million miles away.

How could that ever, ever, ever, ever now be fulfilled? And day after day, and month after month, and year after year, Joseph is languishing.

Right throughout all the years of his twenties, Joseph, you think of it, all his years of his twenties, Joseph is in this pit in Egypt.

The forgotten man. Now, it's quite extraordinary. And yet, despite all that he's gone through, when these two men are asking about their dream, he's talking about God.

[37 : 10] Whenever he gets brought before Pharaoh, he's talking about God. Despite all that's going through, he never, ever loses his faith or his trust in God.

But you see, God is in control. And we often, and I'm sure, just like Joseph, we often think God is not active. Maybe tonight you're like that. Maybe tonight you've been praying and praying. Just take, for instance, the salvation of a soul, of somebody in your family. And you're praying and praying and praying about this. And you're saying, oh, what's the point? God is inactive. with regard to me. It's not that you're doubting God's activity or doubting that God is able, but with regard to you and your prayers, you feel that God is not active.

Well, he is. the seeming inactivity of God is not inactivity at all. God was at work in the whole providential care and government of the life of Joseph and Joseph's whole family.

[38 : 18] And this may seem strange, it must have seemed strange to Joseph, but in all these years of forgottenness, God was working and he was preparing Joseph for what was ahead.

Now, Joseph had no, he wasn't seeing the full picture. Yes, he still had these dreams, but he wasn't seeing the full picture, but God was at work. And one of the ways that God works is to break people. You know, if God's going to elevate somebody to be used for him, for his glory, he normally has to break that passion. He has to break them so that they become utterly dependent upon himself. He breaks them so that they are not seeking any of the glory and honor themselves. And you saw the way that God had to break, for instance, David, we're following in the book of Samuel, with Ivor, the life of David.

And all these years as David is being hounded by Saul, barely escaping with his life, God is breaking him. Moses, 40 years earlier, Moses was, he might have been quite an arrogant, I don't know, but he certainly was a totally different man when he was aged 40 to what he was when he was aged 80.

[39 : 37] He had 40 years in the wilderness before he led the children of Israel through another 40 years in the wilderness. But when he became a shepherd away in the back of beyond, he had been a prince in Egypt.

God, that was part of his training. But then God had to break him so that and mould him to become a real man of God. And that's the way God works.

And we've always got to understand that and realise that because God's ways are not our ways and God's thoughts are not our thoughts. And when God breaks a person, he is preparing them for the exaltation so that the exaltation, in fact, it won't go to their head.

Joseph became God's man in God's way and did God's work in God's way. So here we are two years later, Pharaoh has a dream. We read the dream. Very simply, seven really good fat cows come out of the Nile followed by seven really wasted ugly thin cows.

and the seven thin ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows and they just remained seven thin ugly cows. And then there were seven big fat ears of corn on a stalk, of grain on a stalk, and then there were seven thin, blasted, wasted ears and they ate up the seven fat ones and they still remained thin.

[41 : 09] And when Pharaoh had this dream, he woke between the two dreams, he was really troubled because he knew this dream means something. And he called all the magicians and all the wise men and he says, hey, here's my dream.

Please tell me what it means because I know it means something. And not one of them was able to tell. And then as all, you have the whole court of the king round about and then the cup bearer.

All of a sudden he remembers, oh, and he steps forward and he said to the king, and this I suppose to a certain extent was a wee bit difficult for the cup bearer.

Verse 9, then the cup bearer said to Pharaoh, I remember my offenses today. I remember my offenses today.

He had, before he could tell about Joseph, he had to tell Pharaoh and remind Pharaoh about what had happened, about how he had done something wrong and he had been punished by Pharaoh by being put in prison.

[42 : 22] So he starts off by saying, I remember my offenses today. And you know, friends, there are times that's exactly what happens with ourselves.

You know, we're just going along in life. And all of a sudden God stops us. And I'm sure we've all experienced that, where God reveals to us something of ourselves.

And it's like we're saying, just like the cup bearer, I remember my offense. Things that we had long forgotten, things that were submerged down into the forgottenness within our memory, somehow comes flooding back before us.

And we say to ourselves, oh, was that me? And God reveals something of ourselves to us every so often.

Particularly if we become over-complacent. Particularly if we become spiritually proud. Particularly if we begin to think more of ourselves than we should. God will draw us up short by revealing to ourselves something of ourselves.

[43 : 29] So that the pride will be broken. And will be brought up and say, oh, oh Lord, forgive me. And you know, it's very easy to go, we can very quickly go from thinking something of ourselves to falling down like the public and saying, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

And the Lord does that to his people because he hates to see spiritual pride. He hates to see his people trying to take more credit to themselves than they should. food. So anyway, the cup bearer comes forward and he tells Pharaoh the story.

And he said to him, there is a man, there is a man who can tell and interpret dreams. Now, as we said, all the time God was at work.

Because God has a purpose and a plan. And God's purpose and plan involve far more than Joseph. You see, this is the thing about our lives. And it's quite difficult for us to understand that. It's just our nature. We are, and we can't help it. We are very caught up with ourselves. And we can't help that. But it's so difficult for us to understand that God, as he works, works through us, for other people as well.

[44 : 58] It's one of the most difficult things to understand is that our life is not just about a shelf. God always has a big picture. And he's working in the lives of everybody through us all.

It's quite amazing. And God has a purpose for his people. Because you remember that God made a promise to Abraham.

He called Abraham out. And he said to Abraham, I'm going to make of you a great nation. And through the nation, your nation, my nation, all the nations of this world are going to be blessed.

And of course that was the eventual promise of Jesus. And he reiterated that promise to Isaac. And again he reiterated the promise to Jacob.

Jacob, remember, his name was changed to Israel. At that time, Jacob's family, the whole group of them, numbered 70.

[46 : 02] There were 70 people in the land of Canaan that were of this family. That was the size of the family, 70. And God says, I'm going to make a great nation of you.

Now what we've got to remember is that these were times of bloodshed, times of fighting, and it would be very, very easy for Jacob's family to be wiped out.

Because there were battles and sort of squabbles going on all the time. And we have an instance of that when Jacob's daughter, remember he had 12 sons and there was one daughter Dinah.

Dinah was raped and Jacob's sons tried to, well, didn't try, they avenged what happened. And they did so by, you can read about it in Genesis chapter 34, but they did so by a sort of way of treachery. And they ended up killing all the men in this little city of the Hivites. And after Jacob discovered what they did, this is what Jacob says, you have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land.

[47 : 19] my numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household. So Jacob himself is very aware of just how vulnerable his little group are.

And God has made this great promise to Abraham as one, then to Isaac, and then to Jacob.

They're now numbering 70, but it's still very, very few.

So God's purpose is to make this a great nation and he's going to prosper them. And it's God's purpose and plan to take them down in safety and security to Egypt and to give them the best part of the land and give them royal security so that nobody will touch them.

until they have grown to be, as we know, a great nation. And that's what happened over and over the years. Until a time would come when God was going to again lead them back as a nation to Canaan.

And so this is all part of the plan. How Joseph is taken down and Joseph is going to be like the magnet that is going to draw Jacob back, or not back, but take him down to Egypt.

[48 : 41] So you see, God is at work all the time. That's why we say the inactivity of God is not inactivity. He's working. And it's the same in your life and my life. Because right now we cannot see the full picture.

We're only seeing where we're at. But there's a big picture being worked out in all our lives. And so here we are at this moment where Joseph is taking up from the prison, from the pit to the palace. It's an extraordinary moment. The Lord takes him up and that's what we find. Joseph turned his prison, a pit, and he's transported straight away to a palace.

And you know, that's what the Lord does for us. And to a certain extent, he does it twice in the believer's life. He does it first of all when he saves us. Psalm 40, which we'll finish with tonight, I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear at length to me.

This could have been written for Joseph or written even by Joseph. It wasn't, but it could be. At length to me, he did incline my voice and cry to hear.

[49 : 56] He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock, establishing my way, and he put a new song in my mouth, our God to magnify.

That's what the Lord does. We sang about that in Psalm 113, how he takes from the downhill and lifts up and exalts with a princess. That's the way God works.

There are no half measures. He does it completely and fully. And that's what happened in the experience of Jacob. Sorry, the experience of Joseph.

And while he does that in the life of the believer, he will also do it twice, as I say. That's what he does first time. But you know, when we come to leave this world, it will be even a greater transformation and a greater exaltation because we will be transported straight on into glory.

And as we sing about that in Psalm 45, how they are brought then into the palace of the king there, they shall be brought with gladness great and mirth on every side into the palace of the king.

[51 : 06] And there they shall abide. In this world we are lifted from the pit onto a rock, a secure rock, but then we're taken from that secure rock and transported into glory.

Up, up, up. It's amazing. And that's what we find happening to Joseph. Joseph. And so Joseph interprets the dream.

And of course we've always got to remember that God is in control of everything. The king's heart we read in the Bible. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord and he will turn it wherever he will. Let's always remember that. The king's heart or the ruler's heart is in the hand of the Lord and he will turn it wherever he will. That's why Paul tells us to be praying.

Remember what Paul says. This is what Paul says. Supplication and prayer and intercession and giving of thanks be made for all men and for kings and for all that are in authority.

[52 : 15] Why? That we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in godliness and honesty. what a responsibility lies in the church there.

You know as we look around today and we look at our governments and we look at how things are, I'm sure so often we moan and we say, ah, you know, it's not right the way things are.

Are we praying instead of moaning? Are we coming to the Lord and praying for those who are not God? Because that's what the Bible tells us to do.

We are to pray for those who have the rule over us. It doesn't mean to say that we have to agree with them or even like them. But we are to pray for them in order that we will be able to live a life of peace and godliness and honesty in this world.

So you see there is an awesome responsibility placed upon the church. and we have to ask ourselves, the church has to ask itself, are we doing what the word requires us to do?

[53 : 27] It's something I challenge myself as I do we complain and moan and not pray? Because if that's all we do then we're going to get to a certain extent what we deserve.

There's a huge responsibility placed upon the church in these things. And so then Joseph of course interprets the dream.

And of course we see here that Pharaoh is completely taken, completely taken, I shouldn't, it's not the word taken in, but he's amazed with this man Joseph.

And he sees that this is a man of discernment, a man of wisdom, and that the spirit of God is in him. Now I don't know what sense that Pharaoh had of God, but he knew that this was a special man.

And he recognized all that in Joseph. And so Joseph, the plan is very simple. In the years are plenty, set aside, build great store houses, fill them with the excess, fill them with the surplus, put a fifth aside, so that when the famine comes, there will be plenty grain.

[54 : 43] And I mean, there's a lot that we could say here. But in conclusion, what I want to say here is that Joseph has always been looked upon as a type of Christ.

There have been certain some of the characters in the Old Testament have always been looked as types of Christ. And Joseph certainly has through his exaltation, through his humiliation and his exaltation, to his coming into ruling, into government at the age of 30, of his being falsely accused, of being put into the pit of all the different things that have happened, and then of his government and of his rule, and of his opening up the storehouses, and making provision and being the saviour of Egypt and indeed of the whole world round about, because all the lands came down to Egypt to get food.

Otherwise, they would have all perished. So Joseph becomes the one who makes the provision. And in fact, we're told there, Pharaoh actually says in verse 55, when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread, and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, go to Joseph.

And we go to one who is even greater than Joseph. One that Joseph pictured. And the Bible says to us, go to Jesus.

Maybe you're somebody who has tried life in all its different shapes and forms. But you know, whatever you get in life, it runs out.

[56 : 26] The big difference between Joseph's storehouse and Jesus' storehouse is there came a day when Joseph's storehouse emptied. Jesus' storehouse will never, ever, ever empty.

All the resources, all the provision, everything that you need to satisfy you in time and eternity is in Jesus. You might be enjoying life right now in this world, but let me tell you one thing, it cannot last. It will eventually run out. That's the nature of this life. But what Jesus gives you in giving of himself will never, ever run out.

Go to Jesus. Let us pray. Oh Lord, our God, we give thanks for the lessons that we see, the parallels that we see in your word, and help us to believe and to understand.

Give us the faith to accept what the word of God is saying to us. Lord, be our shield and our shelter, our refuge and our guide, and bless each one of us.

[57 : 38] Bless the youth fellowship tonight, and we pray to bless all our young people in all the different activities within this congregation. Lead us in the way of truth.

Take us to our home safely, and forgive us our sin in Jesus' name. Amen. Now concluding Psalm, Psalm 40 from the Scottish Psalter. Psalm number 40 from the Scottish Psalter.

I know we sang this morning again, but we're going to sing it again this evening. The tune is St. Columba, Psalm 40 from the Scottish Psalter. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear. At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear, took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay, and on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way.

He put a new song in my mouth, our God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear, and on the Lord rely. Oh, blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies, respecting not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies.

[58 : 49] Page 259, 1-4, tune St. Columba. I waited for the Lord my God. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear.

A breath to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear.

He took me from the fearful death, and from the mighty grave, and on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way.

He put a new song in my mouth, our God to magnify.

many shall see it and shall fear, and on the Lord rely.

[60 : 36] O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies, respect in all the proud nor such as turn aside to lies.

O may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.