

Church Together

Joseph - Dungeons & Dreams

5th May 2024



Welcome

In today's Service we will be looking at: **Genesis 39 v. 1 - 23 & Genesis 40 v. 1 - 23**

The theme for our service today is: **Joseph - Dungeons & Dreams**

Today our service also includes: **Communion**

We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for today's service and that you would be able to **Know That All Blessings Come From God, Regardless Of Our Situations!**

Call To Worship

Psalm 100 v. 1 – 5 NLT

Shout for joy to the Lord, O earth! Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy.

Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his.

We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving;

go into his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him and bless his name.

For the Lord is good.

His unfailing love continues forever, And his faithfulness continues to each generation.

Opening Prayer

Lord, today we recall your faithfulness. Thank you that you walk with us every day, that you are with us always.

We proclaim that your promises are true and your goodness and love never fail. In this moment we come to you and lay our lives before you.

May we honour, worship and adore you with every fibre of our being. Father, we proclaim that you are the Holy One, the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come.

Your beauty and majesty are beyond compare. On this day we join with all those who worship and confess you as Lord, from generations past and present, and with all who sing of your greatness and splendour.

Lord we adore you. Lord we love you. Lord we bow down and worship you.

Amen

Song Suggestion

Tell Our My Soul





INTEGRITY

**is doing the correct thing even
when no one is watching!**

An aerial photograph of a river with rapids, showing turquoise water and white foam. The image is used as a background for the text.

BE ON GUARD.

STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH.

BE COURAGEOUS.

BE STRONG.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13 NLT

Bible Reading

Genesis 39 v. 1 – 23 NIV

Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

2 The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. 3 When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, 4 Joseph found favour in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. 5 From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. 6 So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph's care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, 7 and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

8 But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. 9 No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin

against God?" 10 And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

11 One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. 12 She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

13 When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, 14 she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. 15 When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

16 She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. 17 Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. 18 But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

19 When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger. 20 Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined.

But while Joseph was there in the prison, 21 the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden. 22 So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. 23 The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

Song Suggestion

Majesty, Worship His Majesty



Communion

As we gather today we come to share in this act of Communion together, remembering the love and sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the Cross. We remember the price that he paid for our sins and for our forgiveness. We gather together here in Church as the body of Christ in order to share the bread and the cup together. We come in faith, conscious of our weakness, seeking to renounce our sin, humbly putting our trust in Christ, and seeking his grace, as we look forward to the day when he will come again.

A prayer of Thanksgiving:

Heavenly Father, we offer you this day our praise and thanksgiving; we thank you for raising Jesus to life again and exalting him so that we might call him 'Lord', as we offer our faithfulness to him and seek to share in his ways. Loving Lord, we thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit, powerfully present in your people and your world, for the fellowship of your church, and for all the means of grace and the hope of glory. Living God, fill us with your Spirit, that as we share this bread and this cup we may feed on the body and blood of Christ, and be empowered for service in your world. Heavenly Father, accept our prayers and thanksgiving in the name of Jesus, the light of the world and the life of your people.

Our normal practice is to say these words:

For I received from the Lord what I also pass on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of

me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11 v. 22 - 26

After all have received the bread and the cup and after a period of silence, we end with these words in a Prayer of Thanksgiving for the blessings received at the Table:

Leader: Your death, O Lord, we commemorate. Your resurrection we celebrate. Your final coming we await. May the glory be to you, O Lord.

Response: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Loving Gracious God, we praise you for what you have given and for what you have promised us here. You have made us one with all who know you as Lord and Saviour. You have fed us with the bread of life and renewed us for your service. Now we give ourselves to you and we ask that our daily living may be part of the life of your eternal kingdom, and that our love may be your love in the world where we find ourselves., through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray these things.

Amen

Bible Reading

Genesis 40 v. 1 – 23 NIV

The Cupbearer and the Baker

Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt. 2

Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, 3 and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined. 4 The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, and he attended them.

After they had been in custody for some time, 5 each of the two men—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were being held in prison—had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own.

6 When Joseph came to them the next morning, he saw that they were dejected. 7 So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were in custody with him in his master's house, "Why do you look so sad today?"

8 "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them."

Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

9 So the chief cupbearer told Joseph his dream. He said to him, "In my dream I saw a vine in front of me, 10 and on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes. 11

Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in his hand."

12 "This is what it means," Joseph said to him. "The three

branches are three days. 13 Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. 14 But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. 15 I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favourable interpretation, he said to Joseph, "I too had a dream: On my head were three baskets of bread. 17 In the top basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head."

18 "This is what it means," Joseph said. "The three baskets are three days. 19 Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale your body on a pole. And the birds will eat away your flesh."

20 Now the third day was Pharaoh's birthday, and he gave a feast for all his officials. He lifted up the heads of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker in the presence of his officials: 21 He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh's hand— 22 but he impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation.

23 The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.

Song Suggestion

Praise My Soul, The King Heaven



Church Together

Thought

Someone once joked, '**Behind every successful man there is... a mother-in-law!**' You may or may not agree! But the truth is, behind every real success – the kind that doesn't rust, fade or turn sour – is God, and this part of Joseph's story reminds us that he prospered because the Lord was with him, as we are told in **Genesis 39 v. 2, 21, 23**, which says: 'The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master . . . The Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden . . . The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did'.

Rudely uprooted from home and family, Joseph is replanted in the household of Potiphar – not with the care lavished upon a cherished houseplant, but as a common weed among the slaves. Yet, instead of complaining about the soil conditions or the scarcity of rain, Joseph roots his life in God. A perfect example of what Paul later exhorted to slaves in **Ephesians 6 v. 5 – 8** which tells us: 'Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. 6 Obey them not only to win their favour when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the 8 will of God from your heart. 7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the

Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free’.

Soon, Joseph is blossoming so well that even Potiphar notices and transplants Joseph indoors into his household. Greed and lust on the part of Potiphar’s wife resulted in Joseph being thrown into prison; yet, amazingly, Joseph continues to bloom and thrive.

So often we want to bear fruit for the Lord, but somehow, conditions never seem quite right for us. We use

‘Someday...’ statements to excuse ourselves. ‘Someday, when my children are older...’ or ‘Someday, when we’re financially stable...’ Joseph could have said, ‘Someday, when God gets me out of this dungeon...’, but he didn’t.

‘Two men look out through the same bars: one sees the mud, and one the stars,’ wrote Frederick Langbridge.

Joseph looked out from behind those prison bars and set his sights high – on God. Joseph’s trust in God and his faithfulness in doing God’s will did not depend on circumstances or apparent ‘success’. Joseph bloomed – he worked hard, proved himself trustworthy and kept his integrity intact – not only in the luxury of Potiphar’s house, but even in the gloom of a dungeon.

I wonder if we are looking out from behind the ‘bars’ of life? Maybe, our ‘bars’ are of a relationship gone sour, a financial crisis, unemployment, ill health, or some other crisis? Are we seeing only the mud – sadness, insecurity, fears? Or will we, like Joseph, look heavenwards to God, who created both the stars and you?

If you’ve ever gone on a diet, you’ll agree that it’s easy to simply not open a box of chocolates. However, it’s much harder to refuse a chocolate when someone shoves the box under your nose and pleads with you to try ‘just one’.

Potiphar's wife trailed Joseph, provoking him with her words and seductive glances. We don't have to seek out sin – Satan offers it to us on a silver platter, attractively and tastefully arranged, just like the tempting chocolates.

Joseph demonstrates a strategy that works for overcoming temptation: be firm, and strong! He says no and refuses to compromise. Don't flirt with temptation.

Genesis 39 v. 10 tells us that Joseph refused to 'even be with her', but instead, move away from the temptation before him, as he ran away from the house.

Though in a tight spot, Joseph was not preoccupied with his own problems. 'Why are your faces downcast today?' he asks kindly. Having experienced God's comfort in his own life, Joseph extends that comfort to others. As Paul writes in **2 Corinthians 1 v. 4**, God 'comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God'.

Have you been blessed by God? Then become a blessing to others, and in blessing others, you will find yourself blessed in return. So, what can we learn from Joseph, both as individuals and as a church?

Without Jacob's protection, Joseph must make his own way. Aids and graces are replaced by four crucial qualities:

FIRSTLY, JOSEPH KNOWS AND RESPECTS HIS LINE

MANAGER (Genesis 39 v. 1 – 6; 40 v. 4)

Potiphar's wife had great influence in the household, but Joseph knew he was answerable not to Potiphar's wife, but to Potiphar alone.

We need to respect and show the right attitude towards others within church settings and to pray for clear thinking in church and workplace relations.

SECONDLY, JOSEPH KNOWS RIGHT FROM WRONG

(Genesis 39 v. 9)

He names the affair as 'a wicked thing'. He refuses the comfort or excitement it might bring him; nor is he taken in by Potiphar's wife's self - assurance. Resisting pressure to conform is not easy, therefore we need to pray for clear vision and strength to stand for what is right, when we know that something is wrong, no matter what the cost will be to us personally.

THIRDLY, JOSEPH KNOWS THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF SERVICE (Genesis 39 v. 7 – 9)

Freed from family baggage, and the dream that had constantly irritated relationships, Joseph, the ruler, learns to serve others, rather than thing of himself.

Trustworthiness is a fruit of godly contentment which Joseph displays without grasping for more.

Serving others is a difficult but essential task for

ambitious people. We are told in **John 13 v. 12 – 17** that

Jesus called us to be servants. The passage says: 'When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I

have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me

'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet,

you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you

an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16

Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master,

nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17

Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you

do them'. We must, and need to pray for clear

understanding and humility, as we seek to serve others in

the way that God intends us too.

FINALLY, JOSEPH KNOWS WHERE HE STANDS WITH GOD

(Genesis 39 v. 9; 40 v. 8)

A sin against Potiphar is a sin against God. Joseph's world - view is integrated: God is present and active everywhere. Awareness of this saves Joseph from adultery and, in prison, from self - glorification.

Joseph's success is not just because of God's blessing, but because he himself knows where all blessings come from - God himself. A strong person is one whose life is centred in a godly framework, therefore we should strive to live our lives in the full knowledge that we are accountable before God and we should pray for a clear ordering in our lives.

Prayers Of Intercession

Heavenly Father, as we celebrate and worship together today, we bring to you in the precious name of Jesus the needs of the church, the needs of the world, the needs of others around us and our own needs.

We pray for the church: for the way in which we can worship you in different ways; and for those who dare not celebrate you openly. We pray for Christians in countries where there is persecution and fear. Help them to know the loving presence of your Holy Spirit. Help us to be glad of your presence, and to rejoice in your Son. Give to us the help we need to be loyal and faithful as your church here on earth.

We pray for peace in the world: for countries where there is war; for places where there is hatred between races; for the leaders of nations. By your Holy Spirit among us may bitterness and hatred be cast out, and the peace and goodwill of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus, find a place in the hearts of all peoples.

We pray for people in need: for those who are ill, for the lonely and bereaved; for the refugee and the homeless; for the hungry and the poor. Be near to all who especially need your love today; let your Spirit be with those who care for them, and give to all of us the desire to help when and where we can.

We pray for our family and our friends: for those away from us today; for those who have asked for our prayers;

for those that we are able to meet with and be with. In all of our life, in our giving and receiving, in all that we are able to do at this time, may we remember that we are part of your heavenly family here on earth.

Finally, we pray for ourselves: we ask for strength to serve others; we ask for deepening love; we ask for adventuring faith and a boldness of thought; we ask for a depth of courage to face the tasks ahead and we ask that you would be present in all the days that are ahead of us.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
On earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power
And the glory, forever and ever.

Amen

Temptation


usually comes in
through a door
that has
deliberately
been left open

Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.



A person wearing a dark hoodie is walking away from the camera on a path in a park. The scene is set at sunset, with a warm orange and yellow glow in the sky and trees in the background. The person is carrying a bag and is walking on a paved path. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

**WHEN WE FALL
TO TEMPTATION
GOD'S LOVE AND
GRACE ARE
ALWAYS THERE
TO PICK US UP.**

Song Suggestion

To God Be The Glory



Blessing

We go from here, Lord, with you to guide us; may friends and visitors enrich us, May what you have revealed to us teach us, May the Bible and our prayers direct us, And so may every step of our journey please you.

Amen