

Genesis 41:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker:

Analysis

Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me... This passage is part of the Joseph narrative, a masterfully crafted account demonstrating God's sovereign providence working through human choices and circumstances to accomplish His redemptive purposes. The Joseph cycle shows how God transforms evil intentions into instruments of salvation.

Central themes include divine providence orchestrating events toward redemptive ends, the testing and refinement of character through suffering and success, forgiveness overcoming betrayal and injustice, and the preservation of God's covenant people through famine. Joseph's rise from slavery to second-in-command of Egypt illustrates how God exalts the humble and uses seeming disasters for ultimate good.

Theologically, these chapters reveal:

1. God's meticulous sovereignty over all events, even evil human actions
2. suffering as preparation for future service rather than punishment
3. forgiveness as reflecting divine character and enabling reconciliation
4. God's covenant faithfulness across generations ensuring the survival and blessing of His people
5. how present suffering gains meaning when viewed from the perspective of God's larger purposes.

Joseph's words "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (50:20) epitomize biblical theodicy and providence.

Historical Context

The patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12-50) reflect the cultural, social, and legal customs of the ancient Near East during the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BCE). Archaeological discoveries including the Mari tablets, Nuzi tablets, and Egyptian records confirm many details: nomadic pastoralism, covenant-making ceremonies, marriage customs, property laws, and international travel patterns described in Genesis.

The cultural practices reflected include: treaty/covenant forms (Genesis 15), bride-price customs (Genesis 24, 29), inheritance laws favoring firstborn sons (Genesis 25, 27), adoption practices (Genesis 15, 30), levirate-type arrangements (Genesis 38), and Egyptian administrative systems (Genesis 41, 47). These parallels confirm Genesis's historical reliability while showing how God worked within ancient cultural frameworks to accomplish His purposes.

For later Israelites, these narratives established their identity as Abraham's descendants, explained their claim to Canaan, justified their possession of Joseph's bones (Exodus 13:19), and provided models of faith despite imperfection. The patriarchs' failures and God's faithfulness encouraged Israel that covenant relationship depended on God's grace rather than human merit. The movement from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt set the stage for the Exodus and conquest narratives.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
2. What obstacles prevent us from living out the truths presented in this verse?
3. What connections can we trace from this verse to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?

Interlinear Text

פַּרְעֹה	קָצַף	עַל	עֲבָדָיו	וָיָתַן	אֹתִי	בְּמִשְׁמַרְ	בֵּית
Pharaoh	was wroth	H5921	with his servants	and put	H853	me in ward	house
H6547	H7107		H5650	H5414		H4929	H1004
שָׁר	הַטֹּבָחִים	אֹתִי	וְאֶת	שָׁר			
both me and the chief	of the guard's	H853	H853	both me and the chief			
H8269	H2876			H8269			
הָאֶפֶסֶתִּים:							
baker							
H644							

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 39:20 (Parallel theme): And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.