

When Joseph refused to have an affair with Potiphar's wife, the scorned woman accused Joseph of attempting to rape her. Potiphar got angry and threw Joseph into prison (Genesis 39:19–20). The favored son who became a favored slave was thrown into prison for a crime he did not commit!

Genesis 39:21-40:23 records the next chapter in Joseph's life...

1st – Joseph is a favored prisoner. Genesis 39:21-23

Joseph did not know why God allowed him to be thrown into prison for a crime he did not commit, but Joseph believed God was sovereign and good (Psalm 100). This belief about God helped Joseph to be content in prison.

- **To be content in your present, you must believe God is sovereign and good.**

To be content in your present, you must believe God is great and good, and He knows what you need to experience to become the person you need to be to do what you need to do.

2nd – Joseph is a forgotten prisoner. Genesis 40

Joseph flourished in prison, but days turned into weeks, weeks turned into months, and months turned into years. Joseph began to wonder if he was ever going to get out of prison. Then, one day, two important men were sent to prison and put under Joseph's charge. Joseph believed God sent these men to help him get out of prison and back to his family.

The chief cupbearer and baker had disturbing dreams. Joseph knew these dreams were from God and believed God wanted him to interpret the dreams for the men. After Joseph interpreted the chief cupbearer's dream, he pleaded with the man to ask Pharaoh to release him from prison.

"And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh so he might let me out of this place. For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it." (Genesis 40:14–15, NLT)

Joseph was sad when the chief cupbearer forgot about him. He believed the Lord had sent the man to help him get out of his unpleasant present, but God wanted Joseph to spend two more years in prison.

- **To be content in your present, you must submit to God's will.**

How did Jesus endure the suffering and shame of the cross? He humbled himself in obedience to God and submitted to His Father's will (Luke 22:42; Philippians 2:3-13)! If you want to be content in your present, you must submit to God's will for your life.

3rd – Joseph is a faithful prisoner.

Joseph refused to get bitter toward God. He kept trusting the Lord and doing his best to serve the warden and the rest of the prisoners (Colossians 3:22–25). When things got hard in prison, Joseph believed he could ask God to give him the strength to continue to be faithful and content in his unpleasant present. Joseph got this belief from his father, Jacob (Genesis 28:10-22).

- **To be content in your present, you must get strength from the Lord.**

Paul was able to be content in prison because he called upon God for strength! Paul experienced joy in jail because he had joy in the Lord (Phil. 4:4-13)! And you can be content and have peace and joy in your unpleasant present by getting strength from the Lord!

Some Personal Questions:

1. *Are you complaining about your present, or are you content in your present?*
2. *Do you believe God is sovereign and good and submitting to His will for your life?*
3. *Are you living by your strength or getting strength from the Lord?*