

Joseph: Forgotten, or Not?

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: 10 November 2019

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and turn to Genesis chapter 40.! The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, and he attended them.

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

When Joseph came to them the next morning, he saw that they were dejected. So he asked Pharaoh's officials, who were in custody with him in his master's house, Why are your faces so sad today?

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.

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

[1 : 28] 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. This is what it means, Joseph said to him.

The three branches are three days. 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.

But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness. Mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison, for 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.

When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favorable interpretation, he said to Joseph, I too had a dream.

On my head were three baskets of bread. 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. This is what it means, Joseph said.

[2 : 34] The three baskets are three days. Within three days, Pharaoh will lift off your head and hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat away your flesh.

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.

He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation.

The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph. He forgot him. Well, we are studying the providence of God in the life of Joseph, and our memory verse for today is Proverbs 16, 4.

The Lord works out everything for his own ends, even the wicked for a day of disaster. And we're seeing that God's providence indeed does extend to the wicked acts of wicked men.

- [3 : 49] I don't know about you, but I sleep better at night because that is true. There are many wicked men, and yet our God rules and reigns over them all.
- Joseph, too, found that to be a comforting truth, a truth that he pillowed his head on each night in his prison.
- It's the truth that will set us free from thousands of worries that our God reigns and reigns over all. There were a lot of wicked things done to Joseph in chapter 39 that we saw last week.
- Sins, temptations, anger, painful injustices that he had to suffer, just like there were in chapter 37. And all of these were under the control of our God.
- And they were further links in the chain of God's providence to get Joseph into prison. Because God has him down in Egypt, now he needs to get him into Pharaoh's palace.
- [5 : 01] And the Lord, that is in order to save his family from the coming famine, so the Lord is going to send Joseph to the palace by way of the prison. So it's all coming together, you see.
- The wickedness of tempting Potiphar's wife and the purity of Joseph becomes the next move on the chessboard that sets things in motion and moves him closer to fulfilling God's purpose for him.
- She falsely accused him. Her husband believed her. And in a rage, throws Joseph into prison. Not just any prison, but we're told it's the place where the king's prisoners were confined.
- And that, too, is important because Joseph is going to the palace of the king by way of the prisoners of the king. It will be through one of the prisoners of the king that he will get there.
- So in prison, we see happen again what happened in Potiphar's house. Joseph rises to the top. God was with him. He blessed him.
- [6 : 09] He gave him success. And whatever he did as he served faithfully, willingly, excellently, joyfully, the warden had never seen a prisoner like Joseph before.
- And so he decided, I'm just going to turn all the prisoners over to him. And once he did, he saw that Joseph was so faithful in carrying out the whole prison that he didn't look into anything that he had turned Joseph over to.
- So I suppose he went to the back room and played games on his cell phone all day long. He didn't need to bother with what was going on in the prison. Why? Because Joseph was that faithful.
- And so he's virtually the warden of the prison, although he is himself a prisoner. And then we read in verse 1 of chapter 40, Some time later, the cupbearer and baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt.
- Pharaoh was angry with them, and he put them in the same prison where Joseph was confined. And there they were assigned to Joseph to attend them. Now think of God's providence in all of that.
- [7 : 24] Orchestrating the actions of the cupbearer and the baker that angered Pharaoh the king enough to get them sent into prison. Now there's a lot of speculation among commentators as to what happened.
- Did the baker burn the toast of Pharaoh? Did the cupbearer spill his wine or overlook a fly in the cup as he handed it to Pharaoh?
- We don't know, but we do know this. If it was a fly in the cup, it was a providential fly, wasn't it? It was there to fulfill a purpose. And huge consequences were hanging on that fly being there, if that's what it was.

We pointed out, our salvation hangs on Joseph getting to Pharaoh and being in a position to save his family from the famine.

Because from Joseph's family would come the Savior. Well, we don't know what it was. How did the cupbearer miss it as he handed the cup to Pharaoh?

[8 : 33] Maybe it wasn't that at all. Maybe the two of them told a joke to each other and were laughing and the king thought they were laughing at him. We do know that kings have killed servants for such trivial things as that.

Maybe it was something more serious. Maybe the two of them had an assassination plot. Or maybe the king just thought that they were plotting against him. Whatever it was, behind it all is this God of providence orchestrating even the very things that angered Pharaoh.

And even orchestrating the mood that Pharaoh was in when they did it. The fact that he was angry enough to put them both in prison. Now, it's interesting, God has used anger a lot, hasn't he, in Joseph's life.

The anger of his brothers. The anger of Potiphar's wife when he refused her advances. The anger of Potiphar to throw him into prison.

And now, the anger of the king against his two officials. The fact is that he was angry enough to put them both in prison.

[9 : 46] That's important. He didn't just fire them. He didn't just dismiss them. He didn't just give them a warning. No, it's to prison with you. And a lighter sentence, short of prison, would have missed the opportunity for Joseph to meet them and find his way into the palace.

So, the anger of Pharaoh. But on the other hand, the Lord restrained his anger from being so great that he would have killed them on the spot.

Which rulers as well have done in history. Even though he would later kill one of them. He didn't do it on the spot. They must get to prison and meet Joseph to pave his way to the palace.

So, what do we learn in this first link? We learn that Proverbs 21.1 is faithful and true. That the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord.

And he turns it and directs it like a water course wherever he pleases. So, God directed the heart of this angry king to throw them both into the same prison where Joseph was.

[10 : 59] And the timing of it all was critical too. For this happened during the time when Joseph was in prison there. Not before or after. Again, he would have missed this providential meeting.

So, Potiphar's anger first got Joseph thrown into prison. And then sometime later, Pharaoh's anger gets the cupbearer and baker thrown into prison while Joseph is still there.

So, if Potiphar would have learned the truth about his wife and Joseph. And would have said, oh, I see Joseph was innocent. And let him out.

Would have missed his opportunity. To get to Pharaoh. So, sometime later. Those are painful words to a young man in prison.

Sometime later. He's still there. Because there's some things that are more important than getting justice in this life.

[12 : 03] There are some things that are more important than getting out of prison. That you don't deserve to be in. And it is the fulfilling of God's plan for our lives.

Proverbs 20 and verse 24. A man's steps are directed by the Lord. That's another providence verse. A man's steps are directed by the Lord.

So, the Lord directed Joseph's steps from Potiphar's house right into this prison. And then he directed the steps. Each step. To get the baker and cupbearer into the same prison.

Proverbs 16.9. In his heart a man plans his course. But the Lord determines his steps. So, Joseph, the cupbearer, the baker.

They all had plans. None of those plans had anything to do with going to jail. But the Lord determined their steps. And he got them to jail.

[13 : 09] Even against their own planning. Because there's this perfectly timed providential meeting that would have tremendous consequences hanging on it.

Like what? Like saving Joseph's whole family from starvation and extinction. So, that one of his brother Judah's sons could be born.

Who will be the lion of the tribe of Judah. Who will bring salvation to a number that no one can count. Most of us are in that number.

Wonderful. So, this meeting. It has to happen for a savior to come. These two prisoners were put under Joseph's care. And what amazing care it was from one who was himself a prisoner being unfairly punished.

It's the first, by the way, it is the first mention in the Bible of prison ministry. And what we find is not a down in the mouth Joseph griping and complaining about the bad hand that he was dealt.

[14 : 18] And all turned in upon himself with self-pity. Why not? That's the natural response of man in Joseph's circumstance.

Well, because the Lord is with him. And he's satisfied with the Lord. And he's enjoying him. And he's surrendered to him.

And he's content to let the Lord take the pen and write the story for Joseph. The story of his life that would go in a whole different direction than what Joseph would have planned.

And he's finding all he needs in the Lord who's with him. And that saves him from being a needy person. That needs everybody else to minister to him.

You know people like that? They're not. Their cup isn't being full and running over from the Lord. And so they need, they need, they need. They need everybody to serve them.

[15 : 18] But not Joseph. The Lord is with them. And he is his portion. And he's finding his all and all in him. About 400 years ago in Scotland, a godly minister, Samuel Rutherford, spent some time in prison for his faithfulness to the Savior.

And he testified that there are more pleasures to be found in prison with Christ than are to be found in a palace without Christ. And one day he heard the rumor that they were planning to banish him as an exile across the sea.

And he wrote to a friend, let it come if God so wills it. The other side of the sea is my father's ground as well as this side. And that's all that mattered. My father's there.

He owns that land. And I'll be all right. In other words, he was finding, what Joseph was finding, both of them in their prisons, that the Lord is more than enough for me.

And that freed Joseph from this inward preoccupation with self. And it made him forgetful of self so that he can be alert to the needs of others around him.

[16 : 30] How many times do we miss? We don't even notice we walk right past people. Why? Because we're self-focused. But where Christ is filling the soul.

We're free to look out and to see who around me is in need and to move toward them in grace. Matthew Henry comments, a good man will do good wherever he is.

Wherever he is. So make him a slave and he'll bring blessing to his master and to all who are in the house. Throw him in prison and he'll find people there to help, to bless, to serve.

Again, I bring that challenge to you, brothers and sisters. Are you blessing those where you live, where you work, where you worship, even while you're going through hard providences or have the hard providences made you so needy that you have nothing to give to anyone else?

The Lord Jesus was going through the worst of providences. And yet he was ever giving, wasn't he? Even on the cross. His whole life was one of going about doing good.

[17 : 38] Dorcas, leaving a trail of good works behind her wherever she went. Spreading everywhere the aroma of Christ. That's what happens when Christ is filling us.

And we're not needy, needy, needy for others to fill us. Well, after they had been in custody for some time. There it is again, verse 4.

Some time. Just like verse 1, some time later. Again, these are markers of time that is passing. And for Joseph, the young man in the prime of his life, he is being made to see his best years tick by from the inside of a prison.

And so we're given then the next link in the chain of providence after they had been in custody for some time.

Both the cupbearer and baker had dreams the same night. These were God-given dreams about the future, about things that the cupbearer and baker had no way of knowing whatsoever.

[18 : 41] However, God planted those thoughts into their minds. And this shows us again that the providence of God does have access to men's minds. So God worked that they could both remember their dreams in the morning.

You know, we don't always remember our dreams, do we? We know we dream, but we can't remember. But in this case, God so worked that they did remember their dreams. And they were quite troubled by the fact that they didn't know what they meant.

And it's here that we see something of Joseph's compassionate concern for his prisoners. That he even noticed their sadness. Do you notice people's sadness around you?

Do you see when people are dejected? Do you have any kind of a device in your heart that is able to detect the emotional condition of people around?

Joseph did. He not only detected it, he cared about it. Again, that doesn't happen when you're the needy guy. It happens when God is filling you with joy.

[19 : 57] That you become concerned for the joy of others. And he detects something's wrong. What's wrong, he asks them.

Why are your faces so sad today? He not only cares about the physical well-being, bringing them food and water. He cares about their emotional well-being, just like his heavenly friend cared about him.

Not only keeping him alive, but keeping... He's such a portion, as we sang, that filled him with joy. His cup was full and running over.

Who around you knows that you're concerned for their joy? And how are you showing that? Well, the next mini-link in God's providence is the fact that they actually told Joseph their troubles.

They didn't just say to this prison slave, Nothing's wrong. Mind your own business. Why should we tell you what's on our mind? We're the big shots. We're the officials of Pharaoh.

[21 : 02] And we're talking here. Just bug off. That can happen, can't it? People's self-importance and little slave Joseph. But they didn't.

There's something inviting. There's something attractive about genuine compassion. And that's what they sensed in this stranger Joseph, who from the day they saw him, had been more than friendly to them.

If they hadn't opened their hearts to Joseph, that would have been the end of the story. Because it will be Joseph's ability to interpret dreams that gets him into the palace.

But they have to tell him the dream. And they did. Isn't that neat the way that worked? Well, it didn't just happen, did it? We have a God of providence who opened their hearts to pour out their hearts to this stranger Joseph.

Amazing providence. We both had dreams and there's no one to interpret them. Now, Joseph points them to God.

[22 : 11] Don't interpretations belong to God. God knows the meaning of dreams. And I know God. Tell me your dreams, he says.

And the next link in God's providence is that God gave the interpretation to Joseph. And again, this is huge. Or it all comes to nothing.

So, the meaning of the chief baker's dream. Three, in three days, you're going to lose your head and be hung up on a tree where birds will eat away your flesh.

You say, that wasn't very joyful and happy. Well, but he was faithful, wasn't he? He was telling him the truth. And that, too, is love. The meaning of the chief cupbearer's dream was that in three days he would be raised back to his old job and return to serve Pharaoh.

And Joseph added, when all goes well with you, remember me. And show me kindness. Mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison.

[23 : 12] For I was forcefully carried off from the land of the Hebrews. And even here I've done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon. Remember me. A reasonable request.

And the third day, we're told, was Pharaoh's birthday. And birthdays have been feast days. And he threw a feast for all of his officials. And indeed, it happened just as Joseph had said.

He called for the two officials in prison and had them brought out. And the chief cupbearer was restored to his position. The chief baker was hanged. And that, too, is an amazing providence of God.

Now, both of them had enraged Pharaoh. Both of them had been thrown into prison. But now he treats them differently.

Just as Joseph said. And exactly when Joseph said. In three days. So how did God pull all of that off? Well, I'm not sure.

[24 : 14] It doesn't tell us. But again, we see that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord. And he directs it wherever he wants. Does the Lord want this to happen in three days? He has a way to work the timing of all this out on his birthday.

And his desire to settle up with these two officials. It was all worked out. By a God who works all things. Everything. To fulfill his ends.

Think if. Well, then we read. Well, we don't read. But we have to remember that Joseph was a man of like passions as we are. So you just talked to the official that put the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

You're hopeful, aren't you? This is my ticket out of here. I don't know. But I can imagine that Joseph had some hopes raised. And if he did, they were dashed.

Because we're told the last verse of the chapter that the chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph. He forgot him. That, too, is an amazing providence, isn't it, when you think about it?

[25 : 27] Forgot Joseph? The one who just interpreted his dreams and it all happened just as he said. Forget him who showed such kindness and concern for him and his buddy in prison.

And forget it all just three days later. Yes, because even the cupbearer's forgetfulness was as much a part of God's providence as will be his remembering Joseph two years later.

Now, how does God make a man forget something that momentous that happened three days earlier? And then make him suddenly to remember it two years later?

Again, it shows us God has access to a man's mind. And what they forget and what they remember and when they forget and when they remember. When it needs to bring to pass some purpose of God.

And always with perfect timing. Think if this cupbearer had remembered Joseph just as soon as he got back into the palace. And so he says, you know, Pharaoh, while I was in prison, I met this foreigner named Joseph who interpreted our dreams.

[26 : 45] And they all came true exactly as he said, yada, yada. Just a brush off. And he wanted me to appeal to you to get him out of prison because he was treated unfairly in his own country.

And he said he'd done nothing deserving of prison in our country. What would Pharaoh care about some two-bit foreigner in his prison?

Complaining he didn't deserve to be there. How many whining prisoners must he listen to? I say such an appeal at that time would have fallen on deaf ears. But give it two years.

When Pharaoh has had two dreams of his own that leave him troubled in the morning. And he'll not be able to get Joseph out of prison and into his palace fast enough.

He'll be all ears to hear about Joseph then. And it's all just a matter of timing. Timing. God's providence runs on his own timetable.

[27 : 46] Not Joseph's. Not yours. Not mine. And it's good for Joseph. And it's good for us that it is that way. Because timing proves everything.

Sometimes. Sometimes the timing is the whole thing. So. That's chapter 40. Another chapter in the providence of God in the life of Joseph.

Just want to highlight a few lessons on God's providence in our lives. And especially when we are in hard providences. Because you may not be in an actual prison like Joseph was.

But you might feel just as trapped by trials that are not going away anytime soon. And you feel confined by some troubling circumstances that leave you feeling alone and forgotten.

But it's just not true. And the first lesson is don't mistake being forgotten by men as being forgotten by God.

[28 : 48] Child of God you might be in a dark providence. Such that you feel forgotten by God. But that is far different from being forgotten by God.

David asked in Psalm 13. How long oh Lord will you forget me forever? He felt forgotten by God. For a long time he felt forgotten.

And wondered if it would go on forever. He couldn't see through the dark clouds of providence. He couldn't see God.

He was nowhere to be seen in the good stuff of providence. It was dark. It was a dark cloud. And he feels forgotten. It was the same feeling of Israel under the iron heel of Babylon in Isaiah 49.

Zion says the Lord has forgotten me. And it's interesting how the Lord answers. Can a mother forget the baby at her breast?

[29 : 55] And have no compassion on the child she has born? I thought I knew something of a mother's instinct. Until I saw my daughter Julie.

Staying in Maya's hospital room for 140 days. Sleeping. Watching her. Can Julie forget Maya.

To have no compassion. On the child she has born. I say wow. That's impossible. And we're meant to come to that conclusion.

That is a mothering instinct. That he gives to mothers. For those they have born for nine months. And brought into the world. So helpless in their arms. So needing them. And God wants us to know.

That that is just a dim shadow. Of his loving care. Over his own. She may forget. God says. Now that would shock you. But even if she might forget.

[31 : 03] I will not forget you. You see it's the lesser to the greater. Amazing care. Of all people in the world. To take care of Maya. There's one woman that I would put my money on. That will care for her better than anyone else.

And yet. Even if she should fail. God says. I will never forget you. No. Mothers are not a better.

Caretaker. Over their babies. Than I am. Of my people. Though she may forget. I will not forget. You see. I have engraved you. On the palms of my hands.

Your walls are ever before me. And. What we learn. In hard providences. Is that we need. To cross examine. Our feelings. We heard it in Sunday school.

We. We. We. We don't. Just let them carry the day. Put them into the stand. And try them. By the word of God. So what. Did Jesus.

[32 : 01] Love you so much. That he left. Heaven's glories. To come. And become a man. To humble himself. And stoop that low. To share a body like ours. Capable of suffering. And pain.

And went through a world. That hated him. And. And perfectly. Obeyed the law. For you. Because he loved you so much. And in his temptation. He sanctified himself.

So that. You might be sanctified. And you mean. He took your sins. Upon you. He cared for you that much. And he. He went to the cross. And he suffered the punishment. You deserved. And he was forsaken.

That you might never be. And. And then he died. For you. And he rose again. For you. And he ascended into heaven. Where he now lives. For you. And then what. You're. You're telling. He just walks away.

And forgets you. Right. That. That. That. That doesn't make sense. Cross examine. Your feelings. With the word of God.

[32 : 54] What. What you know. To be true. And. Feelings lie to us. But he will finish.

What he started. Child of God. You are the apple of his eye. He. That means he can't take his eyes off of you. It means he can't get you out of his mind.

He can't forget you. He's got you engraved on his hands. And on his heart. His love will not let him forget you.

So you may be forgotten by men. But never by God. The same David. Who. Who felt forsaken. And says. Lord how long. Will it be forever.

That you forsake me. It says in Psalm 139. 17. And 18. He's thinking better now. He's thinking straight.

[33 : 53] And he says. How precious are your thoughts. Concerning me. Oh God. How vast is the sum of them. These are. These are God's thoughts about him. Were I to count them.

They would outnumber the grains of sand. When I'm awake. I'm still with you. Do you see what he's saying. When I go to bed at night. My thoughts toward you. They shut off.

But. Your thoughts of me. Are always. There. So that when I awake. I'm still with you. I'm still on your mind. I'm still in your. In your heart. Your thoughts. And Jesus says.

Your heavenly father. Knows what you need. Even before you ask. And the reason he knows. Before you ask. Is because he's been watching you. He's never left his eye off of you.

He never slumbers. Day or night. In his loving. Watch care. Over you. And so in dark providences. We need to feed on his loving concern for us.

[34 : 54] We need to go to Calvary. We need to go to the incarnation. We need to see how he has expressed his love. Those are solid rock truths. That won't ban. Feelings. Will change. Bring them.

To the touchstone. Of God's words. So men will disappoint. And forget you. Like the cup bearer did. That's why we are told in Isaiah chapter 2. Stop trusting in men.

That's why we're told in Psalm 146. Don't put your trust in princes. In mortal men who cannot save. Don't put your trust in Pharaoh's cup bearer. Trust instead in the God of providence.

Who loves you. And is working all things together for your good. Who never forgets his own. And lovingly fulfills all his purposes for them.

Daily remind yourself of that fact. In hard providence. I am poor and needy. Yet the Lord thinks upon me. So don't mistake being forgotten by men.

[35 : 52] As being forgotten by God. The second lesson about God's providence. Is don't miss him. And few things are easier. Than missing God in dark providences. Some time ago we spoke of the hiddenness of God.

In Isaiah 45.15. Truly you are a God who hides himself. Oh Savior and God of Israel. And the reason you might miss God in hard providence. Is because his hand of providence.

Most often works through ordinary second causes. And it's the ordinariness of God's providence. That causes us to miss it. Now we've come to Joseph's life.

As a case study of God's providence. Because his life is full. Of amazing providences. That's why we're given 13 chapters. Of God's word. For this one man and his life.

This is critical. This is important. That we learn the providence of God from it. And yet with all the providence of God. That we see in Joseph's life. Apart from the interpretation of dreams.

[36 : 55] God's providence of God's providence. God's providential hand. Moving. Arranging. Directing. Orchestrating. Controlling. Has been hidden. Hidden.

Behind second causes. That are just ordinary stuff. Of daily life. On planet earth. What's more ordinary than parental favoritism?

What's more ordinary than the other children being jealous and full of hatred of the favored one? What's more ordinary than love of money motivating slavery?

A happy master promoting a hardworking slave. It's all pretty ordinary stuff. It happens all the time. A lustful married woman tempting a young man. Hatred and revenge for his rejecting her advances.

The wicked falsely accusing the innocent of her own wickedness. The rage of a jealous husband who believes or lie. The innocent unjustly going to jail.

[37 : 57] A lazy warden turning his work over to a hardworking prisoner slave. Kings and presidents getting angry at those who work for them. Burnt toast. Flies and wine.

Nefarious plots of assassination of leaders. You'll have that. These are ordinary things, aren't they? Dreams during the night. Forgetfulness not remembering. Guilty here.

There's nothing really staggering about any of that list. And my point is this. Few histories in the Bible are so full of the wonders of God's providence.

Yet they are all so ordinary. That if you didn't know about the Bible doctrine of God's providence. And didn't know to look for God's providence in Joseph's life.

You might all together miss God in his history. Oh, but he's there. He's there. Though he's hidden. Behind the ordinary.

[39 : 01] You ever seen those puzzles, kids? Picture puzzles. Maybe the pictures of a tree. And every leaf on the tree is drawn in. And then the question.

Can you find the ten elephants in the tree? And you said, I really wasn't looking for elephants in the tree until you said that. But now that you mention it.

Yes. I see one. He's upside down over here. Here's another one on his side. Here's two of them. And then. Well, until you were told there were elephants in the tree, you didn't see them.

But once you were told and were looking for them, you found them everywhere. That's often the way it is with providence. If we had no scripture truth about our God being a God of providence, we could live in his world full of providences and we'd just walk right by him and miss him.

But once we know that God is a God who who upholds and controls all his creatures and all their actions all the time. Well, then when we come to this creature and that creature in this situation, that in Joseph's life.

[40 : 12] Well, there it is. There's the providence of God. There it is again. What a difference it's making in Joseph's life to fulfill what God had planned from before the creation of the world.

The sparing of his line for the Messiah to be born. We see it then, don't we? And that's the way it is with God's providence. Most of the world is oblivious to the province of God.

But even we can miss it. And we often miss it just due to its ordinariness. There's no drum roll, no heaven opening skies, no theophany and God appears and wows us.

It's just another day. Same old, same old. Ordinary stuff. But don't be fooled. God is everywhere. Active in his providence.

In your normal run-of-the-mill day. You might have missed him this morning, in fact. And what he was doing. Are you looking for him?

[41 : 15] Are you finding him? The doctrine of God's providence teaches us to see him everywhere. Everywhere. And he is everywhere working. That breath you just took. Did you see him in that?

In the next one that you will take. Every bite of food that you take. Do you see him in that? You see, he hides behind the farmer.

And the truckers. And the farmer's market. And mom going to the store and fixing it. And all the rest. He hides behind those ordinary second causes. But he's the one who opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing.

The world every day is eating from his hand. They don't even see him. But we do. Because we have God's word to tell us about his providence. The strength to get up tomorrow and go to work.

A night's sleep. That's his gift. Your husband. Your wife. Your baby. Your children. Your parents. God's hand. Opening.

[42 : 17] Feeding the birds. That you see. The sunset tonight at 530. And sunrise tomorrow at 725. It's so ordinary. So predictable that we miss him.

He's upholding. All things. All things. Upheld. By him. That there's corn being harvested. The changing of the leaves and of the seasons.

Our freedom. Rule of law and order. You know all it would take is God just removing his hand of providence. And we'd see law and order go out the window. Like we're seeing in many places in the world today.

But we don't see it. But it's there. It's a blessed gift of freedom. Unfair treatments you're receiving. Your trials. Your temptations that you encounter.

Every joy or sorrow falleth from above. Traced upon our dial by the son of love. Every joy or sorrow. Every temptation. Every trial.

[43 : 16] But we miss him. Kids every day you receive many gifts from God's hand of providence. But you miss it because they come through your parents. You just think it's mom and dad doing all this for you.

It is. But God's the one giving you mom and dad. And strengthening them and helping them to do it. The fact that you're here today. Did you see God's providence in that?

The fact that you even want to be here today. Do you know it's God who works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure? The very will to be here today.

His hand of providence has reached into your heart. Softened you. And made you desire to come and to sing the praises of Jesus for how good he's been to you in Jesus Christ.

And been good to you another week. Not a hair falls. Not a leaf falls. Not a snowflake falls.

[44 : 11] Not a drop of rain. Not a leader. Not a nation. Apart from the will of God. In him we live and move and have our being. So we're coming up on thanksgivings.

And just this application to thanksgiving. In our thanksgivings we must make good use of the Bible's teaching of the providence of God. Or we'll miss, what, 99.9% of the gifts of God.

Because he's hiding behind ordinary second causes. And if you miss him behind it all. You'll miss your joy, your peace, your hope, your life, your best and heavenly friend.

And if you're in a hard providence and you miss him. And miss him. You'll be frustrated and complaining with delays and detours in your life. You'll be haunted by all the what ifs and if onlys.

You'll think God has forgotten you or doesn't care about you. You'll get all bent out of shape when you're falsely accused. And unfairly treated. Or you'll not be giving thanks to God for all things.

[45 : 18] In the name of Jesus Christ. Or worse you'll start complaining to the potter. About the way he's ruling his world. And you will be wasting your waiting times.

And your delaying times. Because you're stubborn and unteachable. So that's the second lesson. Don't, first don't mistake man's forgetfulness with God's. Don't miss him due to the ordinary means behind which he hides.

And third, don't miss his savior. Don't miss his savior. Isn't it incredible that the little things, the timing of things. How our savior saving us from our sins hangs upon these little things.

That God worked out the hundreds of things that happened in Joseph's life. So that from that family line of Jacob might come a savior to die on the cross for our sins.

That he would go. And there were thousands before and after Joseph's life. Of God's providences. Of protection of the family line. So that a savior could be born as to his human nature.

[46 : 23] And all this God is doing. He's orchestrating it. And he has brought forth the savior. He's come. He's died on the cross for sin. He's risen. He's triumphant.

He's here by his word and spirit. And he's offering you forgiveness. And after God has done all of that. Some of you don't want him.

What is that? Don't miss his savior. Don't stand and say, wow. You know the providence of God is in a pretty amazing reality. I hadn't thought about it. Now it's changing the way I think about everything.

Well, good. But don't miss the savior. That's why all this providence was happening. To bring to pass the big story of a savior coming. To die for us sinners.

And he's a savior who doesn't forget you. The cupbearer was no savior for Joseph, even though Joseph said, remember me.

[47 : 25] But there was another prisoner 2,000 years later. A wicked man, robber thrown into jail. But on this one Friday morning, he was taken from his prison cell to Golgotha, the place of execution.

And his providence would have it. He finds himself, along with his fellow robber, just feet away from the only savior of sinners. Who's being executed the same day. What a kind providence of God.

And the sign above his head reads, Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews. This is the king born of the regal line of Judah, Joseph's brother.

Who was saved from starvation 2,000 years ago. That one of his seed might now be offering himself for the sins of the world.

Well, he didn't look anything like a king. His face was badly beaten beyond human recognition. His beard had been pulled out and a crown of thorns had been pounded into his head. As he looked over, he saw a blood streaked body of a man dying in apparent weakness.

[48 : 37] And they both started railing him and mocking him. Along with all the rest that day. But even as they mocked, Jesus showed love and grace such as was never extended from any cross.

Father, forgive them. For they don't know what they're doing. I'm sure this robber never heard any words like that. And converting grace came upon that man on the cross.

Gave him repentance. Gave him faith. So that he confesses his sins. I deserve what I'm getting. He rebukes the other thief. We're getting what we deserve.

But this man's done nothing. He confesses the righteousness of Jesus. And then he turns to him and he just says, remember me. There's his faith. Doesn't look like a king.

But he had faith to look and live. Remember me, Lord, when you come into your kingdom. And he heard the best words any dying man has ever heard.

[49 : 42] Today you will be with me in paradise. And that's the way it happened, folks. Jesus gave up his spirit first. And then they came around and broke the knees of the prisoners so they couldn't push up and breathe any longer.

And they suffocated to death. And one of them went to hell. And the other one, the one that had said, remember me, found that Jesus didn't forget him. He remembered him and received him into paradise that very day.

And so God's providence has you here. And Jesus is willing to have you. Just come to him and plead mercy. In mercy, remember me, Lord. Don't give me what I deserve.

But have mercy on me. And he'll remember you. And he'll save you. And he'll lead you safely through this life with his kind hand of providence until you see him face to face.

Let's thank him, shall we? Thank you, Father, for the gift of your son. Thank you for saving Joseph's brothers who didn't deserve it.

[50 : 49] That from Judah might come a savior to save us who don't deserve it. And so we thank you, Lord Jesus, that now you cannot forget us.

And that you will remember us in every trial, in every test, and in that last day of life on this earth when we must go down into the valley of the shadow of death.

You will remember us. You'll be there to lead us through and bring us out the other side to welcome us into heaven. And that day when we stand before our maker. You'll remember us and take us in your arm and present us in your righteousness.

Here am I, Father, and those that you have given me. And so we bless you for such a savior. We thank you for the knowledge of this truth of your providence. Help us to live upon it and so to honor you.

And bring others today to take refuge in this savior. We ask in his name. Amen. Amen.