

Bible Truths Illustrated.

'It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.'

Joseph, though ruler over his master's property, was not long allowed to enjoy his prosperity without molestation. His master's wife tried to lead him into sin; but in vain. Joseph's virtue overcame her smiles. When she saw that all her plans failed to accomplish her end, she determined to accuse him to her husband. By mean falsehood she gained her object; and Joseph was cast into prison. But even in the dungeon, Joseph remembered the living God. Care, attention, and fidelity, were still the leading features of his character. Even the drudgery of a prison he performed with neatness and regularity. The smallest piece of work that fell to his hand was executed with as much attention as if it had been the affairs of an empire. The keeper of the prison observed his conduct, and was soon led to entertain a high opinion of him. He saw that the young stranger was worthy to be trusted; and as a reward for his uprightness he treated Joseph well, allowed him to walk at large through the prison, and also committed to his care all the prisoners. But Joseph was not lifted up with pride, nor did he overlook the sorrow and sufferings of his less favoured fellow prisoners. For one morning, on entering the cell of two noted prisoners, and observing their sorrowful and downcast looks, he kindly asked them the cause of their grief. On being told that they had each dreamed a dream and could get no one to interpret them, Joseph asked them to tell him their dreams, and then told them the meaning or interpretation of them. And as Joseph knew that one of them was soon to be restored to his master's favour and the possession of liberty, he asked him to do what he could to get him taken out of the prison also. The butler no doubt promised faithfully to do all that Joseph requested of him; but once back to comfort himself, he

soon forgot Joseph and the kindness which he had shown him when a prisoner.

Joseph, nothing daunted, persevered in well doing. He bore his long and severe trials with noble and manly courage. God was, however, preparing him for occupying an exalted and dignified position. But of this Joseph could have known nothing. He committed his way to God, and contented himself with the honest discharge of present duty.

Joseph's time of trial, though long, came to an end. The king of Egypt dreamed two dreams which none of his wise men could interpret. This led the butler to remember of his dream being interpreted by a young Hebrew in the prison. He immediately informed the king what Joseph had done to him and his companion; and without delay, Joseph was sent for to appear before Pharaoh. Joseph made himself ready in all haste to appear in the royal presence. The king received him with all respect, telling him he had heard say of him that he could understand a dream to interpret it. To this Joseph humbly replied that, 'God would give Pharaoh an answer of peace.' The king then proceeded to relate his dreams to Joseph, who at once explained their import to Pharaoh's entire satisfaction. This done, Joseph ventured to counsel Pharaoh as to how the affairs of his kingdom should be managed during the seven years of plenty. This advice approved itself both to the king and his nobles, so that Pharaoh pronounced Joseph to be the wisest man in his kingdom; and to mark his high appreciation of his merits, the king took off his ring from his own hands, and put it on the hand of Joseph; and as an additional token of honour, he arrayed him in gorgeous robes, and put a gold chain about his neck. This done, the king proceeded to inform him that he was to be next him in influence and power throughout the land of Egypt; and in order to impress his subjects with