

## WHEN DREAMS COME TRUE | GENESIS 41 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 4/28/2024

\*I. Peculiar Work (1-8) | II. Providential Ways (9-16) | III. Perfect Will (17-36) | IV. Promised Will (37-45) | V. Preserving Watch (46-57)

**INTRO:** Everybody loves a “[Rags to Riches](#)” story. It gives us hope, it shows us that dreams can come true. But such stories are often just stories and nothing more. Yet in the study before us, we see *a real-life rags to riches story*. The story of a young man named Joseph, who was taken from totally obscurity to becoming the **second most powerful man in the world in just one day!** Genesis 41 then, is about **When Dreams Come True**. And no story is so exciting and so amazing as this one. Because it’s not just a story about Joseph, **it’s a story about God!** And in this chapter, we see 5 wonderful things about **the God who makes dreams come true.** \*

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**I. GOD’S PECULIAR WORK (1-8)** – Although the butler [Seemingly Forgot Joseph](#), now we learn that God did not forget him! **It was now time for God to move in a peculiar way, Dreams!**

**A. God Gave Dreams To Pharaoh (1-7)** – Pharaoh’s considered themselves as god’s in their time, but this Pharaoh would receive a divine impartation from the **ONLY True God**, using the elements that they considered as god’s. *(God knew how to get Pharaoh’s attention)*

**1. Pharaoh’s First Dream (1-4)** – He saw himself standing on the **Nile River**, which the **Egyptians worshipped as a god** because it brought nourishment, protection, and life. – He first saw **Seven FAT Cows**, which were suddenly “*chewed up*” **akal**, by **Seven SICKLY Cows**. – Interestingly enough, **COWS were emblematic of the Egyptian fertility god, ISIS.** – **The dream was so moving that it woke Pharaoh from his sleep!** *(Then he settled back to sleep)*

**2. Pharaoh’s Second Dream (5-7)** – Which involved **Seven Heads of Grain**. – He saw **One Stalk of wheat**, which was well grown, but suddenly “*swallowed up*” **bala**, by **Seven DISEASED Heads!** – This was equally shocking to Pharaoh because **Egyptians also worshipped Agriculture and Vegetation, which they saw as representations of the god, OSIRIS.** – Again, Pharaoh suddenly awoke from his sleep, only to realize that it was dream *(Ah, but a divine one!)*

**B. God Foresaw Pharaoh’s Reaction (8)** – God knew that when Pharaoh awoke, **he would be troubled in his spirit (8a)** ... God knew that **Pharaoh would seek for an interpreter** amongst his **wise men** and **magicians (8b)** ... God knew that Pharaoh would tell his dreams and become discouraged because **NO MAN COULD INTERPRET HIS DREAMS! (8c)** – *Be careful of fortune-tellers, necromancers, spiritists, mediums, etc. They are often empowered by demonic spirits which can influence humans to believe the lies of Satan! (Go to God, go to His Word for Interp.)*

**P/A** – So, **God hand-crafted Pharaoh’s bewilderments** for the purpose of releasing Joseph from **prison** and **positioning him in a high place of authority.** *All in his peculiar time!* **(tt. Jam 1:3-4)**

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**II. GOD’S PROVIDENTIAL WAYS (9-16)** – Two years before Pharaoh’s dream, **God had allowed ‘Pharaoh’s butler’** to be imprisoned and have a dream so that Joseph could interpret it! God also **had the butler released** so he would be right where God wanted him to be! *(Divine positioning)*

**A. Remembering Joseph (9-13)** – *The circumstances of Pharaoh caused the butler to speak up!* – God, who divinely caused the butler to forget Joseph, now activates his memory (9a).

– He tells Pharaoh of his ordeal (9b-11), then he articulates the precise interpretation of their dreams by young Hebrew servant (12-13). He remembered it happened just as Joseph interpreted!

**B. Requesting Joseph (14-16)** – Pharaoh immediately summoned Joseph because he needed to know! (14). – They brought him up quickly (from Joseph’s perspective, not quickly enough i.e., 13 years!) – They brought him up, from the dungeon (David later proclaimed, Ps 40:1-3...the horrible pit/miry clay!) – Because Egyptians were extremely clean, they had Joseph shave and put off his old garment!

- **Without Hesitation (15)**, Pharaoh blurted out his dilemma, “I have had a dream and there is NO ONE who can interpret it!” – Pharaoh was desperate! He did not care that Joseph was a Hebrew, a Slave, or a Prisoner! He heard that Joseph could interpret, so he inquired.
- **Without Taking Credit (16)**, Joseph denied his own ability and gave all credit to God! Joseph exhibited a spiritual maturity which had grown much since his youthful Dreams. – Joseph was also keenly aware of Pharaoh’s angst, declaring that God would give and answer of PEACE... Exactly what Pharaoh needed! – Jesus grants the same to those who believe in Him (John 14:27) “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

**P/A** – What seemingly had taken a lifetime for Joseph was now unfolding before his eyes! Pharaoh wasn’t aware of it, the butler or even the magicians were clueless of their part in the matter. The Providence of God was coming to pass in His perfect time, to accomplish His perfect will!

**III. GOD’S PERFECT WILL (17-36)** – Pharaoh’s Dreams originated with God. Now God would use Joseph to give Pharaoh the INTERPRETATION of the dream that he so desired. – God also provides WISE COUNSEL from his servant Joseph because God’s plan would happen soon!

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**A. Revealed by Pharaoh’s Retelling (17-24)** – His retelling adds a few details to the dream: He describes the sickly cows as an ugliness he had ever seen in Egypt (19b). And when they “chewed up” the first seven cows, they looked just as sick and ugly as at the beginning (21). – The retelling seemingly communicated Pharaoh’s bad feeling about the dreams! (Spooked!)

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**B. Revealed to Pharaoh by Joseph (25-32)** – Without delay Joseph’s interpretation begins... – Relevance of the Dreams (25) – Joseph kept the focus on God, telling Pharaoh that God’s Will was shown to him by the two dreams, which actually had one meaning for him. – In (vv.26-27), we see the Reality of the Dreams. – He combines the interpretation of seven GOOD cows/good heads to mean SEVEN YEARS (26). – He also clarified that the seven SICKLY cows were SEVEN YEARS (27). Notice, Joseph specifically labels the GRAIN as “empty heads” which would result in SEVEN YEARS of FAMINE! – Finally, in (vv.28-32), Joseph Reiterates the Dreams Importance... i.e., what God was about to do! It would be... a divine work. A time of Plenty and Paucity, a time of Feast and Famine, resulting in SEVERITY IF NOT HEDEED!

Such a Divine Warning...

READ

**C. Required a Wise Man with a Plan (33-36)** – Without inserting himself, Joseph advised HOW EGYPT COULD SURVIVE FOR THE NEXT 14 YEARS! – He then Outlined a Strategy which required 1) A Man of Wisdom and Discernment, 2) Officers appointed to assist with the long-term plan, and 3) A Mandatory Collection of 1/5 of the Grain during the 7-year bumper crop. – THE RESERVES...

...were to be kept in the cities (not hidden)! – **THE REASON** the Precautionary Plan was presented to Pharaoh was so that, **“The land may not perish during the famine.”**

P/A – **God’s Perfect Will** *involves many moving parts*, which only He can orchestrate effectively. **God’s Perfect Will**... will always SUCCEED... when we **HEED** His warnings and instructions!

**IV. GOD’S PROMISED WILL (37-45)** – What happens next to Joseph is a **RISE TO POWER AND POSITION**... *all in fulfillment of God’s Promised will for Joseph and the whole world!* – God literally took Joseph from **“rags to riches,”** from the very bottom to the **very top**, just like He had promised. **READ** – **God’s Promised Will for Joseph** *manifested with Pharaoh’s...*

**A. Acknowledgement of Joseph (37-39)** – Both Pharaoh and his servants confirmed that **Joseph had the Spirit of God in him!** – What is the right spirit? (**tt. Psalm 15**) – Pharaoh concluded that there was **NONE as wise and discerning as Joseph.** (*Do other see God’s Spirit in you?*)

**B. Appointment of Joseph (40-41)** – Pharaoh then **granted responsibility** over his entire estate and the rulership over all Egypt, as well... **2nd only to Pharaoh himself!** (*Big leagues now!*) *Although Joseph didn’t anticipate these responsibilities, God prepared him to assume them!*

**C. Authority of Joseph (42-44)** – God moved on Pharaoh’s heart to grant Joseph **the Authority he would need to rule the land**, as signified by granting of: Signet Ring, Fine Garments, a Gold chain, and Position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Chariot. – **All bowed down to Joseph!**

**D. Acceptance of Joseph (45)** – Pharaoh favored Joseph so much that **HE GAVE him a New Name: Zaphnath-Paaneah**, of which the true meaning is uncertain. However, **Jewish legends** say each letter of Joseph’s Egyptian name meant something when linked together: **“Seer — redeemer — prophet — supporter — interpreter of dreams — clever — discreet — wise.”** – **Pharaoh ALSO GAVE Joseph a New Family in Egypt!** HIS wife **Asenath**, was the daughter of an Egyptian priest: **Poti-Pherah**, which meant that he had strong connections with the religious leaders of the land.

P/A – **Joseph seems to have achieved success quickly!** It really took him **thirteen years of hardship** to get from the bottom to the top. – **His Dreams lit. Coming True!** – Once he wore the shackles of a prisoner; now he had the signet ring of Pharaoh. – **What God Promises, always comes to pass!** – What we can learn from this is that **Promotion and Advancement** comes from the Lord (**Psalm 75:6-7**), *For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south,<sup>7</sup> but God is the Judge: He puts down one and exalts another.* – **Know that it must begin with Humility!** – (**Jam 4:10**) **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**

**READ**

**V. GOD’S PRESERVING WATCH (46-57)** – I find it interesting that (**v.46a**) mentions that **Joseph was 30 years old when he began his Public ministry.** God did the same with **King David** and even **Jesus Christ**. – God trained them up and placed them in authority to serve others and bring Glory to His name! – *He didn’t abandon them at this point, but rather WATCHED OVER THEM for His will to be accomplished!* – On the other hand, **Joseph knew that he was only where...**

he was because of God's blessing and help, and that without God's preserving watch over him, he could easily fall! (Something that we should take to heart *because pride often destroys promotion!*)

**A. Administration of Joseph (46b-49)** – God taught Joseph well, so the first thing he did was **ACCESS THE LAND (46b)**, so that the proper preparations could be made. – (Prov 27:23) says, *Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds.* – In the seven years of PLENTY Joseph *“gathered up,”* and *“laid up”* all the grain in city storehouses. So much was gathered that he *“stopped counting.”* – This is how God can supply! (cf. Luke 6:38)

**B. Additions for Joseph (50-52)** – God knew that Joseph's Offspring was an equally important part of His plan for Israel's future, so He granted him two sons, whose names provide us with **A SIMPLE LESSON** in life: Joseph was hurt by his brothers and others over the **PAST 13 years** but learned that **God's Preserving watch was over Him...** so he named his firstborn son **Manasseh (51)**, which means **Forgetting!** – In like manner, he **ACKNOWLEDGED** God's Preserving Watch over him, by naming his second son: **Ephraim**, which means **Fruitful!** (52)

- This teaches us that **BY God's grace,** *Joseph was able to wipe out the Pains and Bad Memories of the Past by becoming Thankful for the Fruitful blessings of the Present!* (cf. Phil 3:13-14)
- He could have been Forever Bitter at his brothers, holding a GRUDGE against them, but he chose to deal with it now by **Forgiving and Forgetting!** – *“Grudges are like WEEDS in a lovely garden or GERMS in a healthy body: They just don't belong there!”* – W. Wiersbe

**C. Arrangements of Joseph (53-57)** – After seven years of an abundant bumper crop, **NOW** the time came for the **SEVEN YEARS OF SEVERITY (53-54)**, as foretold by Joseph. – All the lands quickly went from **FEAST to FAMINE...** **except for Egypt**, which lit. became the breadbasket for the world! – When the people came to Pharaoh (55), he simply directed them to Joseph... *“Go to Joseph, whatever he says to you, do!”* (WOW!)

- When the time came, **Joseph' Arrangements** were able to sustain ALL of Egypt and even Countries from far off! – It says, *“Joseph OPENED ALL the store houses...”* (56-57)
- The **wisdom** and **discernment** exercised by Joseph was dependent on God, who's **Preserving Watch was over him and the whole world.** – **This is the kind of stuff that Dreams are made of!** – (Rom 11:33) *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!*

P/A – We don't always understand what God is doing through peculiar circumstances, but **He always makes all things beautiful in His time!** (Eccl 3:11)

**CONCLUSION:** *Dreams had been the cause of much hardship in Josephs life.* – But **FAITH** in **God's Preserving Watch Over him** helped him endure each difficulty, so that he would see the day... **When Dreams Come True,** not just his own!