

# The Joseph Story

## Part 4

### Genesis 41

When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile, **2** when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. **3** After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank. **4** And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

**5** He fell asleep again and had a second dream: Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. **6** After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted—thin and scorched by the east wind. **7** The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

**8** In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

**9** Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. **10** Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. **11** Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. **12** Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. **13** And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was impaled.”

**14** So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

- Going back to the previous chapter, Joseph after ministering to the cupbearer said these words:

## **Genesis 40**

**14** But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. **15** 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.”

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**23** The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.

## **Vs. 1**

When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream:

- This was two more years for Joseph in a dungeon...
- A dungeon that Joseph didn't deserve...

This begs the question: Can God take an undeserved circumstance and use it for good? The answer is yes...

## **Joseph's story reminder us:**

- Sometimes the good we do goes overlooked and unrewarded, at first...
- Waiting is a common theme in the Christian life...
- The waiting is humbling...
- The waiting will remind us, Lord I am nothing without you, I can make nothing happen unless you prompt it...
- But we are also reminded

## **Isaiah 40 NKJV**

**29**

He gives power to the weak,  
And to *those who have* no might He increases strength.

**30**

Even the youths shall faint and be weary,  
And the young men shall utterly fall,

**31**

But those who wait on the Lord  
Shall renew *their* strength;  
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
They shall run and not be weary,  
They shall walk and not faint.

### **Joseph's story reminder us:**

- It's God who ordains our starts and our stops.
- Just because nothing is happening doesn't mean God isn't there...  
God's hand was present through it all: when the time was right, the butler remembered Joseph.

### **Vs. 8,9**

**8** In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

**9** Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "Today I am reminded of my shortcomings.

- When the Cupbearer and the Baker were in prison with Joseph and were troubled by their dreams and it's meaning, Joseph said, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."
- I'm so glad Joseph had the opportunity to minister to the Cupbearer and the Baker...
- But can I tell you Joseph was only able to minister to the Cupbearer and the Baker because he first allowed God to minister to him...

- Joseph's ministry was not shallow or without meaning, it came from a deep place in his life. The very place that caused his brothers to hate him and put him away...
- The painful, and what some may even call the shameful areas of our past that God has forgiven and healed is the place where we are often most powerfully used by God...
- If you want to know where your anointing lies, look at your scares and the areas where God has done a work and healed you...
- I can imagine Joseph saying, you had a dream and you want to know what it means. I've been there, tell me your dream.

### **Vs. 14-16**

**14** So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

**15** Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it."

**16** "I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."

- I love this; Joseph says "God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."
- The pain and the prison Joseph had endured had a way of breaking all the pretense off.
- Joseph is not a man pleaser, he is a God pleaser...

## **Galatians 2:20** NKJV

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...

Joseph is dead to self, now he's ready to serve the Lord at this level...

## **Vs. 25-46**

**25** Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. **26** The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream. **27** The seven lean, ugly cows that came up afterward are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched by the east wind: They are seven years of famine.

**28** "It is just as I said to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. **29** Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt, **30** but seven years of famine will follow them. Then all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ravage the land. **31** The abundance in the land will not be remembered, because the famine that follows it will be so severe. **32** The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon.

**33** "And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. **34** Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. **35** They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food. **36** This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine."

**37** The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials. **38** So Pharaoh asked them, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?”

**39** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. **40** You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you.”

### **Joseph in Charge of Egypt**

**41** So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.” **42** Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. **43** He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, “Make way!” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

**44** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.” **45** Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.

**46** Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

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**50** Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. **51** Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, “It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father’s household.” **52** The second son he named Ephraim and said, “It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.”

## Miracle #1

**Manasseh** = "causing to forget"

Joseph said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household."

- We can't be doubly fruitful unless we are also able to forget the troubles...
- Even as the Holy Spirit is able to bring all things to remembrance, he also is able to give the gift of forgetting...
- In his book *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis described hell as a place where no one forgets anything, remembering every slight, every cruel exchange of words, every wrong ever done to them, and everybody is utterly unforgiving. But in heaven all these things are put away, because all things have become new.
- Oh that God would remove the sting of the past. The hurts and the memories of what has been done. It's not we have spiritual dementia, it's that God has removed the pain connected to it.

## Miracle #2

**Ephraim** = "I shall be doubly fruitful"

Joseph said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

12 Tribes of Israel:

- **Reuben** (Hebrew רְאוּבֵן *Rə'ūbēn*)
- **Simeon** (שִׁמְעוֹן *Šīmə'ōn*)
- **Levi** (לֵוִי *Lēwī*)
- **Judah** (יְהוּדָה *Yəhūdā*)
- **Issachar** (יִשָּׂשכָר *Yīssākār*)
- **Zebulun** (זְבוּלֹן *Zəbūlun*)
- **Dan** (דָּן *Dān*)
- **Naphtali** (נַפְתָּלִי *Naṗtālī*)

- Gad (גָּד *Gād*)
- Asher (אֲשֵׁר *'Āšēr*)
- Benjamin (בְּנֵימִן *Bīnyāmīn*)
- Joseph (יוֹסֵף *Yōsēp*), later split into two "half-tribes":
  - Ephraim (אֶפְרַיִם *'Eprayīm*)
  - [Manasseh](#)

Joseph was sold as a slave and his family thought he was lost and gone forever. But God took that one man who represented one tribe and turned him into two tribes.

### 1 Corinthians 3

6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

- For Joseph it was God who made him doubly fruitful and in the most unsuspecting place, the land of his suffering...
- Never doubt what God can do through a person with a right and forgiving heart...

### Matthew 23:12

And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

- As I was praying and meditating on this passage, I felt the Holy Spirit say to me; When Joseph was exalted and placed over all Egypt it wasn't the work of any man, it was God that did it...
- It wasn't his father, it wasn't the Captain of the Guard, or the Cupbearer, there was no confusion it was God that exalted Joseph...