

The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture

Week 5: Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dream

Scripture:

Genesis 41:1-36

Motivation (Why You Need This):

Where are we in Joseph's story?

- Joseph was hated by his brothers – favoritism by his father, coat, dreams
- Joseph was forsaken by his brothers and sold into slavery (ended up as the overseer of Potiphar's house in Egypt)
- Joseph was falsely accused of rape by Potiphar's wife

When we left off last week, we concluded that Joseph kept doing the right thing even when things went *from good to bad to worse*. Why? He trusted that God knew what He was doing and knows the bigger picture.

Daily steps in the right direction doesn't always mean immediate deliverance.

Sometimes disappointment precedes deliverance.

Information (What You Need to Know):

Betrayed, abandoned, falsely accused, imprisoned, forgotten, alone

Joseph is on God's timeline

Genesis 41:1a (ESV) After two whole years,

Remember 40:14-15 - Remember Me to Cupbearer

Genesis 40:14-15 (ESV) Only remember me, when it is well with you, and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house. **15** For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit.”

Waiting is a common theme for those who follow God - it is often much longer than anyone would like

Ecc. 3:1 - For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

Psalms 27:14 - Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord.

Noah - 120 years for the flood

Abraham - 25 years for Isaac

Isaac - 20 years for Jacob and Esau

Jacob - 14 years for Rachel

Joseph - 13 years for freedom

Moses - 40x40 - When he returned, wandering in the wilderness

Israel - 40 years of wandering

Hannah - estimated 19 years waiting for Samuel

David - 12 to 15 years to be king (many Psalms written in this lonliness of time)

Psalms of David During Fleeing:

Psalm 3, 7, 34, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 63, 142

Jesus - 30 years to begin ministry

Paul - 3 years in the wilderness before ministry began

-5 to 6 years in different prisons

Abraham Lincoln - faced decades of failed business ventures, lost elections, and personal setbacks before he would ascend to the presidency

Winston Churchill - Spent a decade out of favor and power pleading and warning the Brits about the growing Nazi Germany threat before he was called to lead

Joseph was not alone, forgotten, or abandoned. He was right where God needed him.
-Be patient, listen, obey, follow (don't try and run ahead or fix the situation)

God Moves and Pharaoh Shakes

Genesis 41:1-8 (ESV) After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, 2 and behold, there came up out of the Nile seven cows,

attractive and plump, and they fed in the reed grass. **3** And behold, seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. **4** And the ugly, thin cows ate up the seven attractive, plump cows. And Pharaoh awoke. **5** And he fell asleep and dreamed a second time. And behold, seven ears of grain, plump and good, were growing on one stalk. **6** And behold, after them sprouted seven ears, thin and blighted by the east wind. **7** And the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump, full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream. **8** So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

Pharaoh is very upset. Look how many times the word, Behold, is used in the dream discription. 5Xs - Hinneh is used showing Pharaoh is shocked at this surreal scene. It said he was troubled (to beat or strike)

These magicians and wise men are the greatest most gifted individuals in all of Egypt. Pharaoh who was seen as God was confused and helpless. His most trusted advisers had nothing. Who dare say anything that could come back on them when the pharaoh is upset and agitated (same guy who beheaded the baker)!

We remember Joseph's words to the baker and cupbearer.

Genesis 40:8 (ESV) And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me."

God Reminds the Cupbearer

It is amazing what we remember and when we remember it!

Genesis 41:9-13 (ESV) Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "I remember my offenses today. **10** When Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, **11** we dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own interpretation. **12** A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream. **13** And as he interpreted to us, so it came about. I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged."

We are never forgotten. Nor are we alone. That is a lie of the enemy. We are precisely (if we are following and obeying God) where God intends. I qualify that because many do not know or follow him. How can you say you follow if you never read the map? The Guidebook. Not a devotional. Not a podcast. A lot of people think they arbiters for our culture and world for God but they do not know Him. Nor do they know His Word.

Rhet and Link - Deconstructed - Telling people how the Bible is interpreted. They could not have been more far off. But these funny friendly guys decieve so many people who should just ready and study God's word for themselves.

There are times when it is difficult to be in God's word. I have been there. But when I need to get down to life I need to get back to God's Word.

Joseph's Day Takes a Sharp Turn

Joseph is just doing his daily prison duties. I should say Pit Duties. The place he has been imprisoned for the last so many years is refered to as the PIT.

Genesis 41:14-16 (ESV) 14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. 15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." 16 Joseph answered Pharaoh, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."

At thirty years old in the Pit. Joseph most likely had a beard and looked pretty rough. He took the time to shave and clean up becuase having worked in Potiphers house he knew how Egyptians thought and how they carried themselves. So he prepared himself to stand before pharaoh.

Notice just like he told the Cupbearer and the Baker. It was not Joseph. But he turns everyones attention to God. The Giver of Dreams and the Interpreter of Dreams. And Joseph is so confident in God he declares that God will give a favorable answer.

Pharaoh Repeats his Dreams to Joseph - I am not going to read the word for word repeat of his dream. There are some changes. In Fact, His words express how disturbed he was by the dream. "v. 19 - speaking about the cows "such as I had

never seen in all the land of Egypt.” Pharaoh is not accustomed to such hideous things. And still speaking of the skinny cows ... **21 but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were still as ugly as at the beginning.** The awful ugly skinny cows though they had eaten the plump cows were still awful, ugly and skinny. These things perplexed Pharaoh.

God gives Joseph the Interpretation

Genesis 41:25-27 (ESV) Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. **26** The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. **27** The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine.

Joseph is honest about who is giving this interpretation. The beginning, middle and end Joseph points everyone’s attention to God.

God has Revealed

God’s dream. God’s interpretation. God’s Plan

God has Shown

All that is about to happen is Fixed by God

God will make it Happen

Genesis 41:28-32 (ESV) **28** It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. **29** There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, **30** but after them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume the land, **31** and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. **32** And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about.

Joseph Closes with God’s Unsolicited Advice

Genesis 41:33-36 (ESV) **33** Now therefore let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. **34** Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint

overseers over the land and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years. **35** And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. **36** That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine.”

Joseph gave Pharaoh guidance based on all God had taught him during the 13 years. Who knows the people God brought Joseph's way. He worked hard. As to the Lord. He listened and he learned. Joseph grew with God.

Application (What You Need to Do):

-We must be faithful and ready for God's timing.

-We must speak God's Words when given the chance to speak.

Colossians 4:5-6 (ESV) Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. **6** Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

-We must know God's Words if we want the wisdom to speak God's Words