

Sermon Notes 7/11/21

“The Promotion of Joseph”

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 41?

1. Point _____ to God.

Genesis 41:16, 25, 28, & 32

1 Timothy 2:1-4

2. Practice the _____ of the _____.

Genesis 41:38

Galatians 5:22-23

3. Put Jesus in _____ of _____.

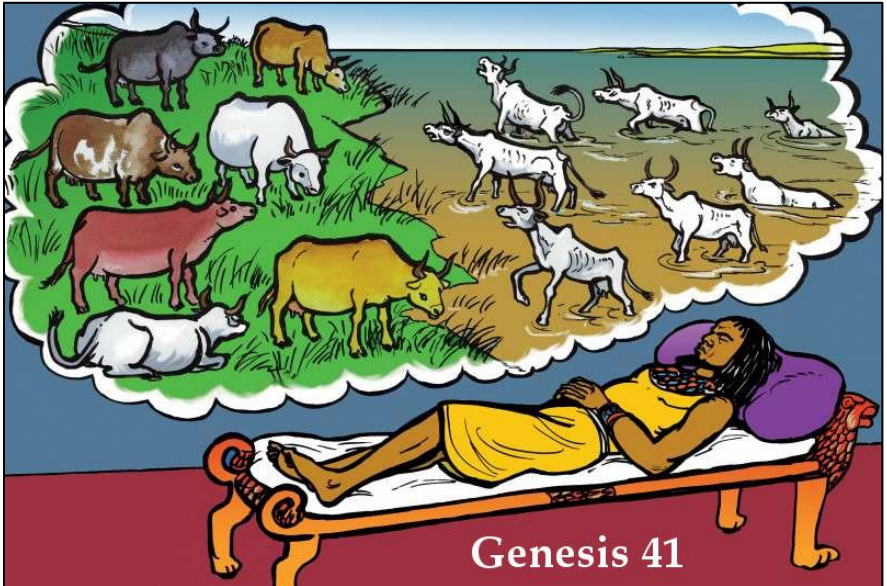
Genesis 41:41

Colossians 1:17-18

4. Praise God for _____.

Genesis 41:52

1 Corinthians 15:9-10



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 41: July 11-18

Genesis 41

In our study of Genesis, we have seen the afflictions and temptations of Joseph, but in chapter 41, we see the promotion of Joseph. While Joseph goes from prisoner to prime minister in one day, we should remember that the preparation for this promotion was 13 years in the making. From the time Joseph was 17 years old (37:2), God was working through many different trials to develop Joseph's character. We should also remember that rapid promotions and great achievements will test our character just as much as temptations and afflictions. The life of Joseph gives us practical principles that will help us remain faithful in times of success.

Read Genesis 41:1-36

1. How much time passed between the end of chapter 40 and the beginning of chapter 41? (41:1)
2. What was Pharaoh's first dream? (41:1-4)
3. What was Pharaoh's second dream? (41:5-7)
4. Whom did Pharaoh ask to interpret his dreams, and what was the result? (41:8)

Three times the text says that no one could interpret Pharaoh's dreams (vv. 8, 15, and 24). But Pharaoh knew that these dreams were important. Kent Hughes writes,

The dreams so stunned Pharaoh that the narrator uses an astonished "behold" six times (in the Hebrew) to indicate the king's response. So, shook was Pharaoh that in the morning he assembled "all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men" (v. 8)—a vast company of wizards and pagan priests with their dream books and priestcraft. "But there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh" (v. 8). Certainly, some attempted, but Pharaoh remained unsatisfied.¹

5. What did the chief cupbearer tell Pharaoh? (41:9-13)

¹ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 476.

6. What did Pharaoh do in response to the testimony of the cupbearer? (41:14)

7. What did Joseph say when Pharaoh asked him about his ability to interpret dreams? (41:15-16)

Four times the text emphasizes the principle that God often works through civil leaders to accomplish His purpose, whether they realize it or not (vv.16, 25, 28, and 32). In Romans 13:1-7, Paul calls all civil leaders “ministers of God.”

8. How did Joseph explain that the two dreams were one and the same message? (41:25-27)

9. What was God showing Pharaoh that He was about to do? (41:25-31)

10. Why did God give Pharaoh the same message in two different dreams? (41:32)

11. What did Joseph tell Pharaoh he should do in light of his dreams? (41:33-36)

Paul Kissling observes,

In the Hebrew there is a wordplay between the word for the certainty (נָכוֹן, *nākōn*) of God's decision to send seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine, and the word for a discerning (נָבוֹן, *nābōn*) man. That certainty points to a certain sort of discerning man, Joseph! The discerning man whom Pharaoh will see should be placed over the entire land of Egypt.²

Read Genesis 41:37-57

12. What did Pharaoh and all his officials think of Joseph's advice? (41:37)

13. Why did Pharaoh think that Joseph was the best man to oversee this 14-year nationwide program? (41:38-39)

² Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 480.

14. What kind of authority did Pharaoh entrust to Joseph? (41:40-44)
15. How did Pharaoh change Joseph's appearance in verse 42?
16. What did Pharaoh do for Joseph in verse 43? Why?
17. What did Pharaoh give to Joseph in verse 45?
18. How old was Joseph when he entered the service of the king of Egypt? (41:46)
19. What did Joseph do during the seven years of abundance? (41:47-49)

Pouring into the Faiyyum Oasis, 75 miles (120 km) south of Cairo, is a large canal bringing water from the River Nile. It was dug during the 12th Dynasty and is called "Joseph's Canal." The Faiyyum is the largest oasis in Egypt and now supports a population of 2 million people. It may be that Joseph was responsible for digging this canal to alleviate the effects of the expected drought.³

20. How did Joseph respond to the birth of his sons? (41:50-52)
21. What happened when the years of abundance came to an end? (41:53-57)
22. What can we learn from the way Joseph handled his promotion and success in life?
23. Who are the "magicians" and "wise men" to whom the leaders in our society turn for answers?
24. How should we live our lives so that others view us as people in whom the Spirit of God dwells?
25. What about God's perspective can you share with a friend, neighbor, or family member this week?

³ John Ashton & David Down, *Unwrapping the Pharaohs: How Egyptian Archaeology Confirms the Biblical Timeline*, (Master Books, 2006), 83.