

Lesson 47

Joseph Rises to Power

Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams and becomes a ruler in Egypt.



K-1st Lesson

Review

- Refer to Lesson 46 Flip Chart. In our last lesson, we learned that Joseph was a slave in Egypt. Who was Joseph's master? *Potiphar.*

Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his whole household. Things seemed to be going well for Joseph, until . . .

- Potiphar's wife got upset with Joseph and told lies about him, which made Potiphar very angry. Where did he send Joseph? *To prison.*

Poor Joseph ended up in prison for something he didn't even do! But God was with Joseph, and Joseph was put in charge of the prisoners!

Then Joseph met two of Pharaoh's servants who had some strange dreams.

- Do you remember who these men were? *The cupbearer and the baker.*
- What did God help Joseph do for them? *He explained what their dreams meant.*

Right. Today we're going to talk some more about dreams. This time Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had two dreams that worried him. I've hidden some pictures from his dreams around the room. I need all of you to find those pictures for me. When you find one picture, bring it back to your seat and hold it until it's time to show it to everyone. Are you ready? Go! Allow students to search for the Dream Cards and bring them back to their seats. You may want to give clues for those students who have difficulty finding one.

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams

When Joseph explained the cupbearer's dream in the prison, he knew the cupbearer would go back to his job. So Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him and help him get out of prison, too.

- Did the cupbearer remember to tell Pharaoh about Joseph and get him out of prison? *No. The cupbearer forgot about him.*

The cupbearer forgot about Joseph. So Joseph had to stay in the prison for two more years! Joseph probably wondered what God was doing. But God was in control. He was waiting for the perfect time for the next part of his plan.

- Show the Lesson Flip Chart. Then one night, it was time; God was about to do something amazing for Joseph. And it all started with two frightening dreams God gave to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Who has the Bible? Please bring it up. Have the student bring the Bible and open it to the sticky note.

Genesis 41:1-2

Listen to what Pharaoh dreamed about. Read Genesis 41:1-2.

- Where was Pharaoh standing in his dream? *By the Nile.*
- The Nile was a big river in Egypt. Then what happened? What did he see come out of the river first? *Seven attractive and plump cows.*
- These cows looked healthy and fat. If you found a picture of a fat cow will you come up and show us? Have students come up front and show the "fat cow" Dream Cards. So Pharaoh saw healthy, fat cows come out of the river and start eating the grass.

Genesis 41:3-4

Then, something else came out of the river in Pharaoh's dream. Listen to this. Read Genesis 41:3-4.

- What came out of the river this time? *More cows. Ugly and thin cows.*
- These cows were ugly and skinny. Who found the pictures of the skinny cows? Bring those up now. Have students come up front and show the "skinny cow" Dream Cards.
- So when these ugly, skinny cows came up out of the river, what did they do? *Ate the fat cows.*
- Yes. They gobbled up all the fat cows! But guess what? They stayed skinny! What a strange dream. Collect the cards and have students return to their seats.

- In Pharaoh's second dream, he saw some plump, good grain growing. One kind of grain is corn. Did anyone find pictures of good corn? Bring those up and show us. Have students come up front and show the "good corn" Dream Cards.

- Suddenly skinny grain grew up beside the good grain. Who found pictures of skinny, yucky corn? Bring those up. Have students come up front and show their "skinny corn" Dream Cards.

- Can you guess what the skinny heads of grain did to the fat ones in Pharaoh's dream? Allow guesses.

They swallowed up the fat grain! Collect the cards and have students return to their seats.

Wow! Skinny cows ate the fat cows, and then yucky grain gobbled up the good grain. Pharaoh was upset by these dreams. He wanted to know what they meant. So he called for his wise men and told them about his dreams, but no one could explain their meanings to Pharaoh.

- Refer to the Lesson 46 Flip Chart. But guess which one of Pharaoh's servants finally remembered Joseph? *The cupbearer.*

Right! The cupbearer told Pharaoh how Joseph had explained his dream in prison and how everything happened just as Joseph said it would.

"Go get Joseph!" Pharaoh commanded. So Pharaoh's servants ran to get Joseph out of prison. It wasn't long before Joseph was standing before Pharaoh. Pharaoh told Joseph his problem—that he couldn't find anyone to tell him what his dreams meant. But he had heard that Joseph could.

Genesis 41:16

Joseph knew that he could never understand dreams on his own. Listen to what he told Pharaoh. Read Genesis 41:16.

- Joseph said someone would give Pharaoh an answer. Who was it? *God.*

Joseph knew God was the one who gave him the ability to explain dreams. He was humble and gave God the credit.

Refer to the Flip Chart. So Pharaoh told Joseph about his dreams. Joseph listened and said that God was warning Pharaoh that something was going to happen very soon. The seven fat cows and seven good heads of grain meant there would be plenty of food in Egypt for seven years. During these seven years, lots of grain would grow. But the seven skinny cows and seven yucky heads of grain meant that there would be seven years of famine.

- What's a famine? *A time when there isn't enough food and people go hungry.*

A famine is when there isn't enough food to go around, and people can starve or even die.

Joseph Becomes a Ruler

- So Joseph told Pharaoh the bad news about the coming famine. Then what do you think happened? Did Pharaoh get angry and send Joseph back to prison? Allow guesses.

Pharaoh didn't get angry. He listened to Joseph, and Joseph gave Pharaoh a plan. He said that Pharaoh should choose a wise man to be in charge of collecting

food during the good years of farming. They should save the grain in storehouses to use later when everyone needed food.

Genesis 41:41-43

Pharaoh and all his servants thought Joseph's plan was really smart. Let's see what Pharaoh did next. Read Genesis 41:41-43.

- What did Pharaoh say to Joseph? He set him over what? *All the land of Egypt.*

Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of the whole land of Egypt! He would be second in command. Only Pharaoh would be more powerful than Joseph.

- What gifts did Pharaoh give Joseph to honor him? *His signet ring, garments of fine linen, a gold chain, and a chariot.*

Refer to the Flip Chart. Each of these gifts had a special meaning. The ring gave Joseph power to make laws and important decisions. The gold chain was given to honor Joseph for helping Pharaoh. Then Joseph was given a chariot. Only very important people rode in a chariot!

Wow! In one day, Joseph went from being a forgotten prisoner in filthy clothes to being the second most powerful ruler in Egypt, and all the people would bow to him.

- And who was in control of all these things that happened? *God.*

Joseph Prepares for the Famine

Now Joseph had a huge job to do. He had to get the whole country ready for the coming famine! And God would help him do it.

Refer to the Flip Chart. Joseph worked hard. In every city, he collected the grain that grew in the fields and saved it in storehouses for later. There was so much grain, they couldn't even keep track of it all!

After seven years of gathering and saving food, the famine came just as God said it would. The famine was so bad that it spread to all the lands, and no one could grow their own food anymore. People got hungry and needed help, so Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians and to people from other countries so they wouldn't go hungry.

Isn't this amazing? It was terrible how Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave. And we thought it was awful when he was put in prison. But God had a plan all along. Joseph ended up in Egypt because God wanted him to be there. Now Joseph could help save many people. But Joseph wasn't proud or boastful; he knew God was the one who made it all happen.

Continue with the Lesson Review Game.

1
God warned
Pharaoh in his
dreams.



2
Joseph told
Pharaoh what
the dreams
meant.



3
Pharaoh
listened to
Joseph.



4
Joseph was
put in charge
of all Egypt.

