

Lesson 47

Joseph Rises to Power

Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams and became a ruler in Egypt.

Studying God's Word

Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Introduction

Slide #3

Slide #4

Refer to Lesson 45 Theme Poster. Joseph went through a lot of ups and downs in his life, didn't he? He started life as a favored son of his father and was given special gifts, like his coat of many colors. Then he had dreams of one day ruling over his family. But things didn't seem to be going right for him when his jealous brothers sold him as a slave to Egypt.

Joseph kept trusting God through some tough times. He also had to be patient to wait for God's timing. Today we'll see how God rewarded Joseph's faithfulness and patience.

To help us develop patience like Joseph, I've brought this treat to represent God's blessing. Show students the treat. Let's see if I have enough for everyone! Count the treats so the students can see that you brought enough for each of them to have one and place them next to the container.

As we go through our lesson, I want you to raise your hand if you hear the word "dream," or variations of the word including dreams, dreamed, dreaming, etc. Every time you catch me saying "dream," I'll add a treat to this container. (See note below about adjusting the number of treats.) We'll try to get enough for everyone by the end of class. But, every time you hear the word "famine," I want you to rub your stomachs like you're hungry. If you miss hearing this word, I'll take out a treat from the container since a famine is a shortage of food! Everybody ready? Let's see if you can listen patiently and carefully for the words "dream" and "famine." Adjust number of treats per "dream" so that there will be enough for each student. There are about 18 "dream" occurrences in the lesson script and about 9 in the Bible reading and [Class Notes \(PDF\)](#), if you decide to include those. "Famine" appears about 12 times later in the lesson. These words are bold in the lesson script to help you recognize and emphasize them for the students.

Refer to Lesson 46 Theme Poster. Back to our review now. Who bought Joseph as a slave in Egypt? Potiphar.

Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials and an important man, made Joseph one of his house slaves. Potiphar noticed Joseph's hard work and God's blessing on him, so he put Joseph in charge of his entire household. God prospered Potiphar for Joseph's sake, and things seemed to be going well, until Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph.

Where did Joseph end up after Potiphar's wife lied about him to her husband? In prison.

That's right. Poor Joseph ended up in prison for something he didn't even do. He was innocent! But God was with Joseph and gave him favor with the keeper of the prison, who put Joseph in charge of the prisoners.

Joseph met two of Pharaoh's officials in prison and interpreted their dreams. Do you remember who these men were? The cupbearer and the baker. Add a treat to the container if the students heard "dream" and raised their hands.

Continue to watch for raised hands when students hear "dream" and add a treat to the container.

Each man dreamed about what would happen in three days. Which man was given back his job, working for Pharaoh? The cupbearer.

Yes. The baker was killed, but the cupbearer was restored to his position. Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him when he got out of prison, but he forgot about him.

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams

Pass out the [Class Notes \(PDF\)](#) to the students.

Two years passed after Joseph interpreted the cupbearer's dreams. Those years must have been hard for Joseph as he waited there in the prison. That's a long time to be patient! He probably wondered what God was doing. But God was waiting for the perfect timing to accomplish his plan.

Genesis 41:1-8

[Slide #5](#)

[Slide #6](#)

[Slide #7](#)

[Slide #8](#)

Turn to Genesis 41. In this chapter, the time had finally come. God was about to do something amazing for Joseph, and it all started with two disturbing dreams God gave to Pharaoh. Follow along in Genesis 41:1-8 as I read. Read the verses.

In Pharaoh's first dream, he was standing by the Nile River, which was extremely important to the Egyptians because it watered their farmland, provided food, and was used for travel by boat.

What happened in Pharaoh's first dream? What did he see? Seven attractive, plump cows were eaten by seven thin cows.

So Pharaoh saw seven healthy, fat cows come out of the river and graze in the meadow. Then seven ugly, skinny cows came up out of the river and devoured the fat cows! Later on in the chapter, Pharaoh says that the skinny cows didn't get any fatter after they ate the other cows. They stayed ugly and thin.

What was Pharaoh's second dream? What was it about? Seven ears of good grain were swallowed up by seven thin ears of grain.

Pharaoh was upset about these dreams. Verse 8 says that his spirit was troubled. He called for his magicians and wise men and told them his dreams, but none of them could tell him what they meant.

But, guess which servant of Pharaoh finally remembered Joseph? The cupbearer.

Yes! After two years, the cupbearer remembered Joseph! This was no accident; God was at work. The cupbearer told Pharaoh how Joseph, a Hebrew prisoner, had interpreted his dream and the baker's, and everything happened just as Joseph said.

Pharaoh immediately called for Joseph to be brought to him. So Pharaoh's servants ran to get Joseph. Joseph had to get cleaned up before he could appear before Pharaoh.

Genesis 41:15–16

Slide #9

Will someone read Genesis 41:15–16? Assign a reader.

Who did Joseph say would give Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams? God.

Slide #10

Refer to the Lesson Theme Posters. Joseph didn't say that he was the one who would interpret the dreams. He was humble and gave God the credit for his ability. What did Joseph say at the end of verse 16? "God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."

Remember to remove a treat if students miss hearing "famine" in this section.

Pharaoh described his dreams to Joseph, and Joseph said that God had shown Pharaoh what was going to happen soon. The two dreams meant the same thing. The seven fat cows and the seven healthy ears of grain represented seven years of plenty in Egypt. During these seven years, the farmland would produce a lot of grain. But the seven skinny cows and seven thin ears of grain represented seven years of famine. Remove a treat if students forget to rub their stomachs when they hear "famine."

Slide #11

What's a famine? A time when there isn't enough food.

How many years of famine were going to come after the years of plenty? Seven.

Slide #12

Slide #13

Let's look at our Class Notes (PDF). Today we have a crossword puzzle to fill in. Who will read #1 and give us the answer from the word bank? Choose a reader. Pharaoh. Have students complete #1. And who finally remembered Joseph in #2? Choose a reader. Cupbearer. Complete #2.

And #3? When Joseph was brought before Pharaoh, who did he say would interpret Pharaoh's dream? Choose a reader. God. Complete

#3.

What was the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams in #4? Choose a reader. Famine. Complete #4.

Joseph Becomes a Ruler

Well, Joseph didn't just deliver the bad news about the coming famine; he also gave Pharaoh a solution. He said that Pharaoh should appoint a wise man over the land of Egypt who would collect one-fifth of the food during the seven good years of farming. They could store the grain in cities and then use it during the seven years of famine.

Genesis 41:39–43

Slide #14

Slide #15

Slide #16

Pharaoh and all his servants thought Joseph's plan was really smart. Let's see what Pharaoh did next. Who will read Genesis 41:39–43? Assign readers.

What position did Pharaoh give to Joseph? He made Joseph a ruler.

Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of the whole land of Egypt. Only Pharaoh would be more powerful than Joseph, which made Joseph the second most powerful man in all of Egypt!

What other gifts did Pharaoh give Joseph to honor him? Look in verses 42–43. His signet ring, garments of fine linen, a gold chain, and a chariot.

Each of these gifts was special. The signet ring was used by Pharaoh to make laws and decisions, so Joseph was given that power. Then he was given fine linen clothing befitting a ruler. The gold chain was a gift to honor people who did a special service for Pharaoh. Then Joseph was made to ride in Pharaoh's chariot! During this time period, chariots were fairly new technology, and there weren't many around yet in Egypt—probably only a few in the whole country! A chariot would be like someone today being given a bulletproof limo or a private jet.

Next, Pharaoh gave Joseph a wife named Asenath. She was the daughter of a priest in an important Egyptian city.

Can you imagine this? In one day, Joseph went from being a forgotten prisoner in filthy clothes to being the second most powerful ruler in Egypt. God blessed Joseph for his faith and his patience. When God wants something to happen, it happens quickly!

Slide #17

Let's complete a few more of our Class Notes (PDF). Who will read #5 and give us Joseph's new position in Egypt? Choose a reader. Ruler. Complete #5.

How else did Pharaoh reward and honor Joseph in #6? Choose a reader. Asenath. Complete #6.

Joseph Prepares for the Famine

Joseph was 30 years old when he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams and became a ruler. Now he had a job to do. He had to prepare for the coming seven years of famine! Joseph had a gift for organizing people and tasks. That's what he had done for Potiphar and for the jailer in prison. God had also prepared Joseph with the knowledge of Egyptian language and culture during the last 13 years. Now Joseph used his abilities to help an entire country!

Genesis 41:48–49

Slide #18

Let's see what he did during the seven good years. Who will read Genesis 41:48–49? Assign a reader.

What did Joseph do with the food he gathered during the seven good years? He put it in every city.

How much grain did he gather? A lot! More than could be measured.

Joseph worked hard to prepare for the famine. In every city, he collected the food from the nearby fields and stored it.

Another good thing happened during those years. Joseph's wife, Asenath, bore two sons named Manasseh and Ephraim. Their names are important because they show how Joseph was grateful to God. Manasseh's name means forgetting, and Joseph made a choice to forget all the bad things that had happened to him. Ephraim's name means fruitfulness. Joseph recognized that God blessed him with children in a foreign land.

Eventually, the seven years of plenty were over, and the seven years of famine came, just as Joseph had said. The famine was so bad that it affected all the lands, and no one could grow their own food any more. People got hungry and needed help, so Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians and to people from other countries.

God used Joseph to save many people. God waited until just the right time to give Pharaoh the dreams, to remind the cupbearer about Joseph, and to give Joseph the interpretation of the dreams. In the meantime, God had been preparing Joseph for his new position as a ruler of Egypt. Joseph learned about Egyptian farming and customs, and God gave him a gift for organizing big tasks—like getting ready for a famine. But Joseph wasn't proud or boastful about his gifts. He knew that his abilities were from God.

Slide #19

Slide #20

Let's complete our Class Notes (PDF). Who will read #7 and give us the name of Joseph's firstborn son? Choose a reader. Manasseh. Have

students complete #7.

And Joseph's second son in #8? Choose a reader. Ephraim. Complete #8.

For #9, what did Joseph sell to the people when everyone ran out of food? Choose a reader. Grain. Complete #9.

And #10, what was God doing through all the trials Joseph experienced in Egypt? Choose a reader. Prepared. Complete #10.

Wow! Thirteen years is a long time of preparation, isn't it? But Joseph worked hard, trusted God, and waited for God's timing, and God made him a powerful ruler! That's a pretty great reward!

Let's count your reward for listening and waiting patiently today and see how many treats we have. Count the treats and pass out to students.

Application

Slide #21

Refer to the Lesson Theme Posters. God changed Joseph's life in a single day! God gave Pharaoh dreams that upset him. Then God used the cupbearer at just the right time and place to bring Joseph before Pharaoh. God gave Joseph the ability to understand the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams and to suggest a plan to prepare for the famine.

Pharaoh was impressed with Joseph and made him a powerful ruler. Joseph had the authority to prepare for the famine and make important decisions. Joseph went from a prison to a palace! He was given expensive gifts, new clothing, and a wife. He also had a job to do, and God had prepared him for it. Joseph knew how to collect food from all over Egypt and to store it so it could be used during the famine. God used Joseph to save many people. His timing was perfect. If God had used the cupbearer to get Joseph out of prison sooner, Joseph wouldn't have been there to interpret Pharaoh's dream and to help prepare for the famine. It was important that Joseph was patient.

When Joseph was 17, he knew his dreams meant he would do something special. But it wasn't until 13 years later, after being a slave, an overseer, and a prisoner, that Joseph was ready for the job God had for him. By this time, at age 30, Joseph was humble and recognized God as the source of his gifts.

Joseph had a gift for interpreting dreams and a gift for organizing complex tasks. What are some other gifts and abilities that God gives people? Allow discussion. Mention gifts like playing an instrument, having a good memory, getting good grades, serving others, teaching others, showing compassion, etc.

Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets (PDF) and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.

Some abilities are things we are born with, but other abilities are things we can learn, like learning to play an instrument or speak another language. Joseph had to learn how the Egyptians spoke and did things. If he hadn't learned those things, he wouldn't have been ready to rule. But he didn't use what he learned to get honor for himself; he gave God the glory and worked to help others. What are some ways you can use your gifts to help or serve others? Allow discussion.

Those are some great ideas! We can all be looking for ways to help others. It doesn't matter if we're writing a thank-you note to someone, singing a song for church, or helping a friend with homework; everything we do can be used for God's glory.

Group Prayer

Be sure to pray with your students and take requests if time allows

Thank God for the gifts and abilities he has given us.
Ask God to help us be patient and to serve others for his glory.

Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

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Board Game

Teams will answer questions and make their way to the finish on the Game Board.

Materials

Review Questions
Game Board (provided in the Teacher Kit)
Dice, numbered cards, or spinner
Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into teams.

Team members will take turns answering the review questions. If they answer correctly, they will roll the dice, spin, or draw a numbered card and move that number of spaces on the Game Board. Follow the directions on the spaces to move ahead, fall back, or switch places with another team. If someone does

not know or does not answer correctly, he may ask his teammates for help. Alternate between teams as long as time permits, repeating questions if necessary. The first team to make it all the way to the Finish wins.

Box Toss

Students will answer review questions then toss the beanbag at the holes in the box to gain points for their team.

Materials

- Review Questions
- Medium-sized cardboard box
- Scissors or knife
- Four beanbags
- Masking tape

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use scissors or a knife to cut two or three holes in the bottom of the box. Make sure they are large enough for a beanbag to easily pass through. Label each hole with a point number: 5, 10, and 15. Use masking tape to make a tossing line several feet away from the box.

Divide the class into teams. Have the teams line up behind the line across from the box. Give each team two beanbags. Alternate asking each team a review question. Students who answer correctly will toss the beanbags at the target holes in the box to earn points for their team. If they answer incorrectly, they may toss the beanbags for fun without the points counting. Students will go to the end of the line after tossing the beanbags. Keep score for both teams. Continue play until all questions have been answered correctly and students have all had a chance to toss the beanbags.

Draw Dice

Teams will answer questions and complete a simple drawing to win. Who will finish their drawing first?

Materials

- Review Questions
- One drawing area for each team (paper, white board, etc.)
- Pencils or white board markers
- One die

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pencil, or divide the white board in half. Draw a mouse on the board as an example.

Ask the first team a question from the lesson. If they answer correctly, have them roll the die.

To begin drawing their mouse, each team must wait until they get a six. They will then draw the mouse's body on their paper or the board. After they have drawn the body, as they give correct answers to the questions, they can continue to draw the other parts of the mouse according to the numbers they roll.



They can draw according to the numbers below:

6 = body

5 = nose

4 = whiskers

3 = eyes

2 = ears

1 = tail

Continue giving each team a turn to answer a question and roll the die. Repeat the questions as necessary. The first team to finish their mouse wins.

You may choose to draw a simple object from the lesson, such as a crown, an open Bible, a fish, etc. Be sure to assign numbers (as above) to each part of the object to be drawn before the game begins.

Four in a Row

Students will answer questions and add a marker for their team onto the grid. Which team will be the first to get four in a row?

Materials

Review Questions

Masking tape

Red and black paper circles or other markers for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use masking tape to make a 16-section grid on the floor. The grid should be four sections wide by four sections long. Each section should be equal in size. Use eight red circles and eight black circles cut from construction paper or other markers for the two teams.

Divide the students into two teams. Give each team eight markers. They will take turns answering the questions. If they answer correctly, they can put a marker in a square on the grid. The first team to get four markers in a row wins the game.

Goofy Golf

Hit the sock with the noodle? Teams must work together to answer the questions and putt to get a hole-in-one in this crazy golf game!

Materials

Review Questions

Swimming noodles or rolled up newspapers

Rolled up socks

Masking tape

Ten sheets of paper

Markers

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use the markers to number sheets of paper 1–10 (use more or less depending on class size and time). Tape down the sheets of paper around the room in a random pattern to form a golf course. You may want to add chairs as obstacles in the path.

Divide the class into teams. Give each team a rolled up sock and a swimming noodle. Ask the first student a review question from the lesson. If he answers correctly, allow him to use the noodle to drive the rolled up sock toward the first sheet of paper labeled #1. Continue with the next team. Take turns allowing team members to answer questions and continue putting the socks along the course to each hole, continuing from where the last teammate left off. The sock must touch or roll over the sheet of paper to consider it in the hole. The first team to reach the tenth hole wins.

Oh No

Not every roll of the dice will be good for the team. Answer the question, roll the dice, and be prepared to say, "Oh no!"

Materials

Review Questions
Two dice

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into teams. Each team will take turns answering review questions. When a team answers correctly, have them roll the dice to determine their points. If a team does not answer correctly, give the answer and repeat the question later. Keep track of team scores.

Numbers aren't always a winner! If students roll:

2 or 3 that team gives 5 points away to the other team
4 or 5 that team takes 5 points from the other team
6–10 face value
11 subtract 10 points from the team score
12 double the team score

(Note: no team can have less than 0 points.)

Pick a Point

Answer the questions correctly to earn the right to pick a point.

Materials

Review Questions
Small paper strips
Cup or basket

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Write various numbers in increments of 5 or 10 on strips of paper to use as point cards. Put the point cards into the cup or basket. Divide students into teams of 4–5 students each. Have each team take turns answering a review question. After each correct answer, let a member of the team draw a point card from the cup.

The number of points on the cards will vary, so the score will have nothing to do with how skilled one team might be. Keep track of each team's points. If time allows, repeat the questions!

Toss for It

How many points? Toss for it! Students answer the questions and toss the beanbag to earn points for their team.

Materials

Review Questions

A deck of numbered cards, or numbers and “wild” written on index cards

One beanbag

Masking tape

Two baskets or containers for cards

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Place several rows of numbered cards facedown with a few inches between them to form a grid pattern (make sure to put several wild cards or Jokers down, too). Use the masking tape to make a tossing line several feet from the cards.

Divide students into teams and have them line up behind the tossing line. Ask the first student a review question. If he gives the correct answer, have him toss the beanbag onto a card. Turn the card over to reveal the points he receives for his team. Face cards or word cards are 10 points each. Wild or Jokers are also 10—plus another turn. All other cards are face value.

Have the student pick up his card and put it in the team’s basket to be counted at the end of the game. Next team’s turn. If a student gives an incorrect answer, he should go to the end of the line. Give the answer and repeat that question later. Continue taking turns until all the questions have been answered. Add more cards to the grid if necessary.

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