

Lesson 47

Joseph Rises to Power

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

Studying God's Word

Introduction

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

Pass out paper and crayons or markers. Today we're going to start out with some drawing. I'm going to divide you into four groups. The people in the first group need to draw fat cows. The second group needs to draw skinny cows. Group three will draw fat corn on the cob, and the last group will draw skinny corn on the cob. Those seem like strange things to draw, but we'll use your pictures later in our lesson. I'm only going to give you two minutes to do your drawing, so draw fast! Ready? Go! Have students draw for two minutes. Then have students hold on to their papers until later in the lesson.

Slide #3

Slide #4

Refer to Lesson 45 Theme Poster. OK. Let's have a little review now. Joseph went through a lot of ups and downs in his life, didn't he? He started life as the favorite 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 and he was taken to Egypt.

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

Potiphar, who was one of Pharaoh's important officials, made Joseph one of his house slaves. Potiphar noticed Joseph's hard work and could see that God was blessing him, so he put Joseph in charge of his entire household. 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 jailer, who put Joseph in charge of the prisoners.

Joseph met two of Pharaoh's officials in prison and interpreted their dreams.

What does it mean to interpret dreams? Allow answers.

To interpret something is to explain what it means. So with God's help, Joseph was able to explain to the two men what their dreams meant.

Do you remember who these men were? The chief cupbearer and the chief baker.

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

Yes. The cupbearer went back to his job, but the baker was killed. Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him when he got out of prison.

Did the cupbearer remember to tell Pharaoh about Joseph and get him out of prison? No. The cupbearer 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. He probably wondered what God was doing. But God was waiting for the perfect timing for his plan.

Encourage your students to bring their Bibles to class. If appropriate, have them read the lesson Scriptures.

Genesis 41:1–4

[Slide #5](#)

[Slide #6](#)

Turn to Genesis 41. 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 41:1–4 as I read. Read the verses.

Where was Pharaoh standing in his dream? By the river.

Then what happened? What did he see come out of the river first? Seven fat cows.

Let's see the fat cows you drew. Everyone who drew fat cows come up and show us your illustrations. Have students come up front and show their drawings. So Pharaoh saw seven healthy, fat cows come out of the river and graze in the meadow.

But then what came out of the river? The skinny cows.

Show us the skinny cows now. Have students come up front and show their drawings. So seven ugly, skinny cows came up out of the river.

And what did they do? Ate the fat cows.

They ate them up! 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 skinny. Have students return to their seats.

Genesis 41:5–7

[Slide #7](#)

So that was Pharaoh's first dream. Let's read about the second dream. Follow along in your Bibles while I read Genesis 41:5-7. Read the verses.

What did Pharaoh see first in this dream? Seven heads of good grain. Yes. Good grain. Corn is a type of grain. So, who drew the fat corn on the cob? Bring those drawings up and show them. Have students come up front and show their drawings.

Then what happened? The seven skinny heads of grain devoured the seven plump heads of grain.

Right. Bring up the skinny corn on the cob. Have students come up front and show their drawings.

So the skinny heads of grain gobbled up the fat grain. Hmm. These were really strange dreams weren't they? Have students return to their seats.

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 Pharaoh what they meant.

But, guess which one of Pharaoh's servants finally remembered Joseph? The cupbearer.

Yes! After two years, the cupbearer remembered Joseph!

Was this an accident or just "lucky" for Joseph? No.

No. There's no such thing as luck. Who was in control of this whole situation? God.

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 dream, and how everything happened just as Joseph said it would.

Pharaoh immediately called for Joseph to be brought to him from the prison. So Pharaoh's servants ran to get Joseph and get him cleaned up before he came to see Pharaoh.

Genesis 41:15-16

Refer to the Lesson Theme Posters.

Slide #8

Slide #9

Joseph came and stood before Pharaoh. Let's find out what they said. Will someone read Genesis 41:15-16? Assign readers.

Joseph said someone would give Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams. Who was it? God.

Joseph said that he was not the one who would interpret the dreams. He was humble and gave God the credit since God was the one who gave him the ability to explain dreams. So Pharaoh told Joseph what he dreamed about. Joseph listened and said that God had shown Pharaoh something that was going to happen very soon.

The two dreams had the same meaning. The seven fat cows and the seven fat heads of grain meant that there would be plenty of food in Egypt for seven years. During these seven years, the farmland would produce a lot of grain. But the seven skinny cows and seven skinny heads of grain meant that there would later be seven years of famine.

Slide #10

Famine: a severe shortage of food; a time when there isn't enough food and people go hungry
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. Many things can cause a famine. Crops may be eaten by insects, or they may not grow because there isn't enough rain. A famine isn't just a little thing like missing a few meals. It means that there is so little food that people can starve or even die.

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

Slide #11

Slide #12

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? 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.

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

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 did not get angry. He listened to Joseph, and Joseph gave Pharaoh a plan. He said that Pharaoh should appoint a wise man over the land of Egypt who would be in charge of collecting 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 41:41–43

Slide #13

Slide #14

Pharaoh and all his servants thought Joseph's plan was really smart. Let's see what Pharaoh did next. Who will read Genesis 41:41–43? 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. He would be second in command. Only Pharaoh would be more powerful than Joseph! What 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 had a special meaning. 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 that a ruler would wear. The gold chain was a gift to honor people who did a special service for Pharaoh. Then Joseph was given a chariot! During this time period, chariots were fairly new and there weren't many around yet in Egypt—probably only a few in the whole country! The chariot would be like someone today being given a limo or a private jet. Pharaoh also gave Joseph a wife named Asenath. She was the daughter of a priest in an important Egyptian city.

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

And who was in control of all that happened? God.

Slide #15

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 huge job to do. He had to get the whole country ready for the coming seven years of famine!

Genesis 41:48–49

Slide #16

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

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

How much grain did he gather? Very much grain. More than he could count.

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

Another good thing happened during those years. Joseph's wife, Asenath, had two sons named Manasseh and Ephraim. The meanings of their names are special because they show that Joseph had chosen to forget the terrible things his brothers had done to him and that he was thankful for all the blessings God gave to him in this foreign land. Manasseh means "forgetfulness," and Ephraim means "fruitful."

After the seven years of plenty were over, the seven years of famine came just as Joseph had said. The famine was so bad that it spread to 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. But God waited until just the right time to give Pharaoh the dreams, to remind the cupbearer about Joseph, and to give Joseph the meaning of the dreams. You see, God had been preparing Joseph for his new position as a ruler of Egypt. During the 13 years Joseph had been in Egypt, he learned about Egyptian farming and customs, and God gave him a gift for organizing big tasks—like taking care of Potiphar’s household and being responsible for the prisoners in the jail. And now he was getting a whole country ready for a famine! But Joseph wasn’t proud or boastful; he knew that his abilities were from God.

Slide #17

Let’s complete our Class Notes (PDF). Who will read #7? What did Joseph sell to the people when everyone ran out of food? Choose a reader. Grain. Have students complete #7.

And #8. What was God doing through all the trials Joseph experienced in Egypt? Choose a reader. Prepared. Complete #8.

Application

Slide #18

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 even gave him a plan to get ready for the famine.

Pharaoh listened to Joseph and put him in charge. Joseph went from a prison to a palace! Joseph was given the authority to make important decisions. He was given expensive gifts, new clothing, and a wife. But he also had a big 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 at just the right time.

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 understood that God was the one who gave him his abilities.

Joseph had a gift for organizing big tasks and a gift for interpreting dreams. 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.

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.

Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

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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