

Genesis 41

1. Verse 1 tells us that two full years had passed since Joseph interpreted the dream for the cupbearer. What do you think was going through Joseph's mind during this time?

How do you think Joseph kept from being discouraged?

Read I Samuel 30:6. Some versions say that David found strength in the LORD. Others say that he encouraged himself in the LORD. What do you think this means?

How would one encourage himself in the LORD?

2. After two years, Pharaoh had two dreams. What was the first dream?

What was his second dream?

Why do you think we are told in verse 7 that "Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream"? What does this tell us about the dreams?

Why do you think these dreams troubled Pharaoh?

According to verse 8, what did Pharaoh do?

How do you think he felt when none of his wise men or magicians could interpret the dream?

What do you think would be the most difficult part of interpreting a dream?

3. After hearing of the dreams and the inability of the wise men to interpret them, what does the chief cupbearer say to Pharaoh?

What do you think he meant by remembering his "faults" or "shortcomings" or "sins"?

Some commentaries state that it would be impossible for him to forget what had happened to him in the prison; therefore, he simply had not wanted to tell Pharaoh. What do you think? Would it be possible to forget such an event?

What does the cupbearer tell Pharaoh? Was his account accurate?

What does Pharaoh do when he hears the cupbearer's story?

4. Try to imagine Joseph's emotions at this time. He was sold into slavery by his brothers. He was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and sent to prison. He was forgotten in prison for two additional years. Then, suddenly, he receives word that Pharaoh wants to see him. What do you think he was feeling?

Several times the Bible will use the word "suddenly" when referring to God's timing. How would you explain God's "suddenly"?

What changes did Joseph go through before appearing before Pharaoh?

5. How comfortable would you be appearing before our President? A Saudi King? A Hamas leader?

What does Pharaoh say to Joseph?

How does Joseph respond?

What can we learn about Joseph from his response?

Read Proverbs 27:21. What does this verse mean to you?

6. Pharaoh then proceeds to tell Joseph his dreams. What additional information does he add to the dream?

What is the significance of Pharaoh's stating that he had never seen anything as ugly as the cows or the grain?

Next, Joseph explains the meaning of the dreams. What does he tell Pharaoh?

This was a major event, yet Joseph's explanation is short and to the point. What can we learn from this?

What was Joseph's explanation as to why God gave Pharaoh two dreams?

7. Joseph was only asked to explain the dreams. However, once he does that, he immediately begins advising Pharaoh. How do you explain this bold move?

Read Matthew 10:17-20. What does this verse mean to you, especially in light of Joseph's situation?

According to verse 33, what does Joseph tell Pharaoh, Pharaoh should do?

Do you think Joseph was promoting himself as the wise man? Please explain.

What responsibility was to be given to this wise man?

Briefly, summarize the rest of Joseph's advice?

8. What was Pharaoh's reaction to Joseph's advice?

What was Pharaoh's reaction to Joseph himself?

Read verse 39. What was Pharaoh's main reason for promoting Joseph?

What does Pharaoh decide to do with Joseph?

Look carefully at Pharaoh's words concerning Joseph. What would Joseph have been able to do?

Look back on all that has happened to Joseph. How had each incident helped prepare Joseph for this moment?

Has God ever used a difficult situation to prepare for a future blessing in your life? If so, would you share a little of what you learned?

How do you think you might handle being placed in such a position of authority?

What would be your greatest concern?

In verse 33, Joseph suggested Pharaoh place a man over the land of Egypt. What does Pharaoh decide to do in verse 40?

Why do you think Pharaoh gave so much authority to Joseph?

Read Matthew 25:21. What does this verse mean to you and how does it apply to Joseph?

9. Only in respect to the throne was Pharaoh greater than Joseph. What would be the danger of being given so much power?

What was the significance of Pharaoh's giving Joseph his signet ring?

What else did Pharaoh do for Joseph?

Again, what does Pharaoh say in verse 44?

10. What name does Pharaoh give Joseph?

What does this name mean?

Why do you think Pharaoh gave him a new name?

Who was Joseph's wife?

What can you learn about the priests of On?

11. Verse 26 tells us that Joseph was 30 years old when promoted by Pharaoh. How old was he when was sold into slavery by his brother?

What has happened to Joseph during this time?

What has happened to Joseph to "qualify" him for such a lofty position?

Read I Corinthians 1:26-31. What do these verses mean to you?

How likely would we be to accept someone like Joseph as a church leader? Please explain.

In what ways have you seen the truth of these scriptures?

What is the significance of verse 46 telling us that Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence?

12. According to verses 47-49, what does Joseph do?

What does this tell us about the land of Egypt?

How easy do you think this would be in our nation? Please explain.

Next, we are told that Joseph had two sons. What was the name of his first son? What does this name mean? Why does he give his son this name?

What was the name of his second son and what does it mean? Why did Joseph choose this name?

13. Following the seven years of plenty, the famine begins just as God had told Joseph. What else do we learn about the famine in verse 54?

When the people of Egypt grew hungry, they went to Pharaoh. What did he tell them to do?

What did Joseph do?

What does verse 57 tell us?

What can we learn about Joseph from this verse?

14. What can we learn about God from this chapter?

What can we learn about God's provision?

During this time, do you think Joseph ever considered exacting revenge? Please explain.