

# STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

## STUDY NUMBER FOUR – GENESIS 41:1-57

### INTRODUCTION:

Sometimes when circumstances do not work out the way we want them to work out we face the most difficult challenge of our life. Are we going to continue to trust God and let Him lead and guide or are we going to become bitter and resentful toward Him. Get at a distance and fail to really recon with the fact He is there and He is working in our lives.

Following World War II someone found scribbled on the walls of a cellar in Germany this great expression of undaunted faith:

I believe in the sun,  
Even when it is not shining.  
I believe in love,  
Even when I don't feel it.  
I believe in God,  
Even when He is silent.

Rudyard Kipling said it well in his beautiful piece called "IF" --

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;

**If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;**

**If you can dream -- and not make dreams your  
master;**

**If you can think -- and not make thoughts your  
aim;**

**If you can meet with triumph and disaster**

**And treat those two imposters just the same;**

**If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken**

**Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,**

**Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,**

**And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;**

**If you can make one heap of all your winnings**

**And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,**

**And lose, and start again at your beginnings**

**And never breathe a word about your loss;**

**If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew**

**To serve your turn long after they are gone,**

**And so hold on when there is nothing in you**

**Except the Will which says to them: "Hold On!"**

**If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,**

**Or walk with kings -- nor lose the common  
touch;**

**If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;**

**If all men count with you, but none too much;**

**If you can fill the unforgiving minute**

**With sixty seconds' worth of distance run --**

**Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
and -- which is more -- you'll be a Man, my son!**

**In our last episode of Joseph we were there. He had fully expected and anticipated, having been jailed unjustly for a year that it was going to be through the cupbearer and the baker who were prominent officials in Pharaoh's court, that it was going to be through them that he was going to get out. In fact after he interpreted the cupbearer's dream we saw the first touch of humanity, "please remember me when you get out to Pharaoh."**

**How did this study end? The curtain dropped tragically didn't it? We heard those somber words "the chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph, he forgot him."**

**Look at the first verse today.**

***"When two full years had passed,"***

**v. 1 When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile,**

**You know if you put that with the last verse "he forgot him" and you realize the emotion of the last chapter and put it with tonight you will have a little bit of a feeling.**

Copyright © 2017 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. The nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is prohibited. Teacher notes have been compiled by Ronnie Marroquin.

**Let's suppose that you have interpreted dreams that are going to involve a 72 hour release or execution as the case may be and a dramatic birthday party for Pharaoh with some expectations that at that 72 hour time limit you too are going to hear some good news.**

**How would you feel at hour 73, 74?**

**How would you feel 24 months -- 104 weeks -- 730 days -- 17,520 hours, since our last study?**

**Every time you would hear the door swing open you would say certainly it is now time. You would read the papers and you would see that everything that you said came true. Surely the cupbearer is working it and, of course, there is a lot of red tape in the government but it is only going to be a few more days. Now it has been two full years. How would you feel?**

**You know it is an amazing thing. You never once see Joseph question God's dealings in his life. Triumphantly he faces it.**

**Certainly he has probably had a lot of these feelings going through his mind. But how can we get into the feelings of a man who just does not understand.**

**He is now 30 years of age. He has spent 13 of those years in slavery and behind bars and faced excruciating periods of suffering.**

**Do you think he might have a reason for being depressed?**

**Do you think that maybe he has screamed at the walls and want to blame the fact that he is here upon God? I do not think so.**

**The secret to Joseph's triumph is in**

**Isaiah 26:3, 4**

**You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.**

**The Lord was never designed to be the perimeter. He is designed to be at the center. And when He is put on the perimeter of our lives and if He is not dead center there is going to be trouble. God made that clear when he outlined the camp of Israel. In the center of the tabernacle, in the center of the Holy of Holies, in the center of the Ark, in the midst of the camp was the presence of God among His people. And as long as He is dead center in your heart all these other things are only going to serve as contributions to make you a better person. God is going to use you, you just keep trusting Him.**

**Joseph did not shove God out of the center of his life.**

**And so**

***“When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream:”***

**v. 1 When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile,**

I love that. What is God saying? “Hey Joseph. I realize that two years ago you thought I was the cupbearer and the baker but I have a surprise for you. It is the dream of the Pharaoh, not the cupbearer and the baker. So it is my perfect timing now.” He had a dream.

Is God’s timing always perfect? It will blow you away when you understand it.

**John 13:1**

Jesus knowing that His hour had come to depart from this world.

**Gal. 4:4,5**

When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son.

**Eccles. 3:11**

He makes all things beautiful in His time.

Pharaoh had a dream and he was standing by the Nile. That is the great river that irrigates the land of Egypt and flows into the Mediterranean Sea. It is the major source of the water supply.

**v. 2** when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds.

**v. 3** After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank.

Now we have 14 head of cattle up on the riverbank, 7 good ones and 7 bad ones.

**v. 4** And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

Now the only way you could explain a dream like that is that Pharaoh had Mexican food the night before.

I think he felt so guilty about it he sat down and ate a whole bowl of Frosted Mini wheat cereal and goes back to sleep again.

**v. 5** He fell asleep again and had a second dream; Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk.

**v. 6** After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted - thin and scorched by the east wind.

**v. 7** The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

He had two different dreams. One the gaunt cattle swallowing up the fat ones. And then heads of grain. Seven heads on a stalk being swallowed up by – that were fat and beautiful by others that were not full heads of grain.

**v. 8 In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.**

Do you remember last time when Joseph went into the prison and the two men had had a dream and he found them dejected? He found them with their faces sad, why?

They knew that there was some indication of their future in those dreams. And now Pharaoh is troubled by this. God is trying to communicate something by those dreams and Pharaoh wants to know what the meaning of that is.

And so he calls in all the guys who are supposed to know and no one could pull it off. Nobody could give him any kind of relief or semblance of understanding or orientation for it.

Isn't verse 9 incredible?

**v. 9 Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "Today I am reminded of my shortcomings."**



**That takes us back to verse 23 doesn't it? The cupbearer did not remember Joseph. He forgot him.**

**Now isn't it amazing how God puts all the pieces together. He blots that out of the cupbearer's mind because it is not on His time schedule for that to happen.**

**The fact that the check did not come through.  
The fact that the project was not pulled off.  
The fact that there was a delay over here is God's prerogative in any person's life for something better.**

**And you do not have any right to an opinion until all the facts are in so just bug off for a little bit and lay back and let God work in that thing because when it all comes together you will really see it and you will be excited and there will be Christians around who will vindicate that.**

**As Pharaoh is frustrated by all the magicians marching through and none of them can give him any kind of relief for the dream the cupbearer says, "oh I am reminded of my shortcomings." Can I ask you what the shortcomings were so we can avoid them?" I think there were three in number and they are ugly among Christians.**

- 1. An ungrateful spirit. An ungrateful spirit.**
- 2. A selfish attitude.**
- 3. Forgetful of a favor. Forgetful of a favor.**

He was so consumed and so excited with his new position again with Pharaoh that he forgot about Joseph completely. It just slipped out of his mind. And now the cupbearer tells the story.

**v. 10** Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard.

**v. 11** Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own.

**v. 12** Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, *[and Pharaoh you know what?]* and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream.

And you know what else Pharaoh?

**v. 13** And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was hanged.”

So Pharaoh says, “I have to get a hold of that man.” Calls Potiphar on the phone and he says, “Do you have a Hebrew slave down there?” “Yeah, I sure do.”

**v. 14** So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

Copyright © 2017 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations, particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Christine Marraquin.

**Can you believe that? Just that quick, calls him on the phone, before you know him Joseph is SOAKING and STEAMING and SHOWERING and SHAVING and getting in some fancy dudes and he is walking into the presence with an audience to the king of the land. That is the way God does things.**

**God allows long periods of delay in our lives so we will learn what it is to trust Him. He loves to have things on hold in your life. If you do not believe that just walk with Him for a while because while everything is on hold and there is no provision forthcoming or no answer to your prayers, those are the times when you are really dependent and you are really sensitive and you are really searching His face and seeking for His will. Then when you have it you are so excited and you are blown away with all the activity involvement, the Lord sometimes has to put back on hold again because He wants some time with you. And He lets those long periods of delay go on. But when he drops the gate and he lets things happen. Whoo they happen fast, quick and oh how beautiful it is for everybody to see that.**

**v. 15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”**

**Joseph is before the king of the land and the king just says, “I had a dream and I understand that you can interpret it.”**

**I love the way Joseph responds.**

**When we start responding this way, I tell you things are going to really begin to happen in your life.**

**v. 16 “I cannot do it,” Joseph replied to Pharaoh, [and his first words] “but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.”**

**Isn't that great! When you are recognizing your own inadequacy and you realize you cannot and your only hope is for outside help and you have never lost your confidence in God first thing he does is “I cannot but know who can.”**

**And you know that is the very first thing you have to learn before you become a Christian. You have to give up all your human works and realize that you cannot but God can. And in a moment of abandonment and surrender to Jesus Christ at that moment you become a child of God. You have surrendered to Him.**

**I am just an instrument that is all. I am a tool in God's hand. Only God can do this. And He is the one who can give Pharaoh the answer that he desires.**

**Do you know what is so beautiful about this? He has never lost confidence in God's person or in God's plan. And those are the two things that will nail your hide to the wall as a Christian.**

**He never lost confidence in God's person. God can do what he wants in my life and whatever He wants is going to work out all right. And he never lost confidence in God's plan.**

**You see he could look back on those two dreams two years ago of the cupbearer and the baker and he could have said, "Well those guys dreamed and in three days they received an answer. Mine was thirteen years." So what. Three days, three months, three years, thirteen years, three hundred years. God is always faithful to keep his promises and He does not keep a stopwatch on us either and we had better not try to keep one on Him or you will be at the height of frustration if you are waiting for God to answer a prayer yesterday.**

**v. 17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile,**

**You see Pharaoh is already aware of the fact that Joseph is the instrument. Now he is going to tell Joseph the dream. And this is basically the dream. I will just read it.**

**v. 18 when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds.**

**v. 19 After them, seven other cows came up -- scrawny very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cow in all the land of Egypt.**

**v. 20** The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first.

**v. 21** But even after they ate them, no one could tell that they had done so; they looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.

**v. 22** In my dreams I also saw seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk.

**v. 23** After them, seven other heads sprouted -- withered and thin and scorched by the east wind.

**v. 24** The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads. I told this to the magicians, but none could explain it to me.”

I have been telling this to everybody and nobody can explain it.

Joseph is not intimidated by the fact that everybody else has tried, he just, verse 25, he has just has complete confidence and peace.

**v. 25** Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do.

I can tell you right at the beginning that the dreams are one and the same and I can also tell you this. That he is telling you what he is just about to do.

**In other words these dreams are just like what the cupbearer and the baker had.**

**The seven lean, ugly cows that came up after they did are seven years. Well verse 26.**

**v. 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream.**

**v. 27 The seven lean, ugly cows that came up after they did are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched by the east wind: they are seven years of famine.**

**v. 28 It is just as I said to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do.**

**v. 29 Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt.**

**v. 30 but seven years of famine will follow them. Then all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ravage the land.**

**Now I read that and I began to think I need to share this to some businessmen. You know you might not think so but God controls your economics. And the sooner you learn that and begin to cooperate, the sooner you are going to be in a position for God to really bless you when you put Him first.**

**You might say, “well God you are over here in the sacred and I’m working in the jungle out here in the secular.” No you do not ever do that. There is one philosophy of camp that I will die with and that is “Christ is all and in all.” He is in everything you do out in the pit and everything you do in the palace. He is everything you do out there in that business world because you are there as a light in that world as much as a man standing in the pulpit before people. And he controls economics.**

**Basically Joseph says you are going to have 7 good ones and you are going to have a collapse. There are going to be bad ones.**

**v. 31 The abundance in the land will not be remembered, because the famine that follows it will be so severe.**

**v. 32 The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon.**

**All he is saying is it is repeated twice. And God said it twice so you would understand that**

- 1. God has already decided that that is what He is going to do. There is going to be seven good ones and seven bad ones.**
- 2. And he repeated it twice so you would be ready. It is going to happen real quick and real soon.**



**That tells you something else. When you see something repeated twice in the Bible you had better set up and listen to it.**

**And you know what is repeated three times in the Bible? “Harden not your hearts in the day of conviction.” That means that God is saying that my friend is serious. When you hear truth and you fail to respond to it and it bounces off of you. And how many people listen to truth, hear it, hear it, they are hearers of the Word and not doers. Just hear it but never do it. They are deceiving their own selves.**

**The reason it is repeated twice?**

- 1. It is God’s will and it is going to happen.**
- 2. And it is going to happen soon.**

**Now Joseph could have stopped there but Joseph also inspired by the Spirit of God because this is part of God’s program goes on in his audience with Pharaoh to tell him what he thinks ought to be done. He says, “sir can I just give you a little bit of advice along with the interpretation of your dream? I would suggest in view of these dreams a couple of economic policies that could be implemented that would really help Egypt if you just pay attention to what I would like to share with you.” You know he has to be impressed.**

**v. 33 And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt.**

**v. 34** Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance.

**v. 35** They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food.

Basically he said you need to set up a Food and Drug Administration. And get you a head honcho for that, then get you several commissioners from all over the land. They will levy a tax of 1/5th of the harvest of all of the Egyptian farmers during these seven good years. They will establish grain elevators in key locations in the land as storage facilities so that when the seven bad years come you will be able to survive because you have taken this 1/5th tax during these seven years and garnered all that in and saved it for this time.

**v. 36** This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine.”

Joseph finishes. Pharaoh looks at him and turns to some of his officials.

**v. 37** The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials.

**v. 38** So Pharaoh asked them, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the Spirit of God?”

Isn't that great. He stuck to his convictions, he brought God into it and immediately Pharaoh recognizes the same thing that Potiphar recognized, the same thing that the jailer recognized and that is that man is blessed of God because the Spirit of God resides in him. And now Pharaoh is saying I want this man in my administration. Joseph cannot believe what he is hearing.

**v. 39** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and as wise as you.

Joseph you have glorified God, God is going to glorify you Joseph.

**v. 40** You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you.”

And Joseph is saying, “reality, reality, reality. Here it is.” It is incredible how quickly God works from the pit to the palace. How quick. Pharaoh just saw great possibilities in Joseph and he invites him in.

**v. 41** So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.”

Copyright © 2017 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citations is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Johnie Marroquin.

Swears him into office on the spot. I mean just like that. Nobody becomes a somebody.

**v. 42** Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.

He said now that we have have you in office, here is the ring of authority, step into my linen closet here and pull out one of the best ones and here is the gold chain around your neck. We are going to make all these provisions.

Oh look at verse 43!

**v. 43** He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and men shouted before him, "Make way!" Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

Executive Vice President of the land with all that it has to offer.

**v. 44** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt."

Okay God we understand why old dad gave you administrative responsibilities at 17. We realize why Potiphar trusted you with all the responsibilities in his household.

Why the jailer turned over to you all the responsibilities. Preparing you for this fine day when now you are the leader of the land.

“Oh by the way Joseph, are you married?” “Well, no, I’m not.

**v. 45 Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.**

What does the name Zaphenath-Paneah mean in Egyptian. It is the “man in whom God speaks and God lives.” Oh, I love that! Pharaoh has only met him once and he calls him Zaphenath-Paneah. The “man in whom God speaks and God lives.” That is why he is called that.

And he is given a lady by the name of Asenath from On, a little community on the east side of the Nile, about 20 miles northwest of where he is and she has grown up in a religious home. Can you imagine receiving a wedding invitation Asenath and Zaphenath request the honor of your presence. You know that is getting everything from A to Z if you have ever seen it before. And he is married.

“And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.”

Copyright © 2017 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Ronnie Merroquin.

In the early days of his administration he has to travel the land and implement the programs and appoint construction companies to build the grain elevators to get everything done so he travels a lot.

**v. 46** Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt.

**v. 47** During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully.

**v. 48** Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it.

**v. 49** Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

The computers just blew up. They couldn't keep track of how much grain was being stored.

**v. 50** Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On.

Isn't that interesting? Potiphera is her daddy. Always to remind him of Potipher and what happened there so that he could have her.

Two children.

**v. 51 Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, “It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father’s household.”**

Can you imagine how he must have felt? Oh. He is praying for a son. I mean you know he wants a son for number one. And you think he took the classes so that he observed it all? Do you think he probably bought bubblegum cigars? It’s a boy! You know, all of that stuff. I imagine he was just so excited he could not stand it.

So he names him Manasseh. Manasseh means, “I am forgetting all my trouble and I am forgetting everything in Canaan. God has me now in the land of Egypt.” Humph.

You know what he telling you with the name of that son? He is telling you that he is big enough to forget those things which are behind and be freed from the bitterness of Potiphar’s house and all of the things he has been through in the last 13 years. That tells you the kind of man he is. He is able to bounce back from all of that and to say, “that does not count anymore, I forget my trouble.”

**v. 52 The second son he named Ephraim and said, “It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.”**

**Forget my troubles and fruitful in the land of my suffering. That is good stuff.**

**v. 53 The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end.**

**v. 54 and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food.**

**There is a contrast there. All of the other lands around suffered because they did not have the benefit of this information. They had not prepared. But Egypt had and there was plenty of food in Egypt.**

**v. 55 When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.”**

**They said, “we are hungry, we do not have any food.” He said, “go to Joseph.”**

**v. 56 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt.**



At the time of need then he begins to open the grain elevators and he gets involved not in a federal give a way program but he sold grain to the Egyptians.

**v. 57 And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world.**

We will watch and see in the next exciting episode of “As the World Turns” next time.

**LESSON #1: When everything is on hold in our lives, God is working out His ultimate purpose.**

**LESSON #2: God’s timing is always perfect.**

**LESSON #3: Joseph never loses confidence in God and his faithfulness to the promises. Joseph never loses confidence in God’s person, in God’s plan. He just continues to trust God. Joseph never loses confidence in God’s person, God’s plan, and God’s promises.**

**LESSON #4: How quickly God can make things happen when He starts to work.**

**LESSON #5: Joseph magnifies God before Pharaoh.**

**LESSON #6: Economics are truly in God’s hands.**

**LESSON #7: The blessing of God upon Joseph’s life meets his every need.**

# LESSON #8: God expects us to forget our troubles and to be fruitful in the land of our suffering.

## STUDY NUMBER FOUR - GENESIS 41:1-57

## NOTES

v. 1 When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile,

v. 2 when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds.

v. 3 After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank.

v. 4 And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

v. 5 He fell asleep again and had a second dream: Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk.

v. 6 After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted—thin and scorched by the east wind.

v. 7 The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

v. 8 In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

v. 9 Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “Today I am reminded of my shortcomings.

v.10 Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard.

v.11 Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own.

v.12 Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream.

v.13 And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was hanged.”

v.14 So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

v.15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”

v.16 “I cannot do it,” Joseph replied to Pharaoh, “but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.”

v.17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile,

v.18 when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds.

v.19 After them, seven other cows came up—scrawny and very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt.

v.20 The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first.

v.21 But even after they ate them, no one could tell that they had done so; they looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.

v.22 “In my dreams I also saw seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk.

**v.23** After them, seven other heads sprouted—withered and thin and scorched by the east wind.

**v.24** The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads. I told this to the magicians, but none could explain it to me.”

**v.25** Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do.

**v.26** The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream.

**v.27** The seven lean, ugly cows that came up after they did are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched by the east wind: They are seven years of famine.

**v.28** It is just as I said to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do.

**v.29** Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt,

**v.30** but seven years of famine will follow them. Then all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ravage the land.

**v.31** The abundance in the land will not be remembered, because the famine that follows it will be so severe.

**v.32** The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon.

**v.33** And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt.

**v.34** Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance.

**v.35** They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food.

**v.36** This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine.”

**v.37** The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials.

**v.38** So Pharaoh asked them, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?”

**v.39** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you.

**v.40** You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you.”

**v.41** So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.”

**v.42** Then pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.

**v.43** He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and men shouted before him, “Make way!” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

**v.44** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.”

**v.45** Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.

**v.46** Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh’s presence and traveled throughout Egypt.

**v.47** During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully.

**v.48** Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it.

**v.49** Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

**v.50** Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On.

**v.51** Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household."

**v.52** The second son he named Ephraim and said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

**v.53** The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end,

**v.54** and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food.

**v.55** When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph and do what he tells you."

**v.56** When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt.

**v.57** And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world.

## **QUESTIONS:**

**1. Read Genesis 41:1-57 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.**

---

---

---

**2. How much longer did Joseph have to stay in prison, according to verse 1?**

---

---

---

**3. In your own words describe Pharaoh's dream.**

---

---

---

**4. How is Joseph brought into the picture, according to verses 9-14?**

---

---

---

**5. What is Joseph's interpretation of the dreams, according to verses 25-32?**

---

---

---

**6. What does Pharaoh do for Joseph, according to verses 39-45?**

---

---

---

**7. Describe Joseph's plan for solving the economic crisis coming upon Egypt in verses 46-49.**

---

---

---

**8. What wonderful thing happened to Joseph in verses 50-52?**

---

---

---

**9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?**

---

---

---

**10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**

---

---

---

**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

**LESSON #1: When everything is on hold in our lives, God is working out His ultimate purpose.**

**LESSON #2: God's timing is always perfect.**

**LESSON #3: Joseph never loses his confidence in God and His faithfulness to the promises.**

**LESSON #4: How quickly God can make things happen when He starts to work.**

**LESSON #5: Joseph magnifies God before Pharaoh.**

**LESSON #6: Economics are truly in God's hands.**

**LESSON #7: The blessing of God upon Joseph's life meets his every need.**

**LESSON #8: God expects us to forget our troubles and to be fruitful in the land of our suffering.**

**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

---

---

---

---