

Genesis

Chapter 41:1-36

☞ **Gen 41:1** *Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river.*

Last weeks study we read of how God used Joseph to interpret the dreams of the Pharaoh's Butler and Baker who were thrown in prison. At the end of the study we read of how the interpretations were correct with the Butler being restored to his job and the Baker being hung. Joseph asked the Butler to remember him and to tell Pharaoh how he was wrongfully thrown in jail.

Starting in chapter 41 we now read that two years have passed and the butler forgot all about Joseph. Or did he? Let's read on and find out.

☞ **Gen 41:1-4** ¹ *Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river.* ² *Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow.* ³ *Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the river.* ⁴ *And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke.*

The Pharaoh had a dream and was awoken by this dream. This wasn't a pretty dream, with cows eating each other. Maybe the Pharaoh thought little about it and could have thought he shouldn't have had that pizza right before bed. But it's not over yet.

☞ **Gen 41:5-8** ⁵ *He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good.* ⁶ *Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them.* ⁷ *And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, it was a dream.* ⁸ *Now it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh.*

The Pharaoh went back to sleep the same night and dreamed again. Even though this dream doesn't seem as severe as the first one with the cows eating each other, but it seems they both had the same type of theme. So the obvious thing for the Pharaoh to do was call for the magicians to interpret the dreams, but they couldn't.

Have you ever wondered why they couldn't interpret these dreams, but it seemed they could interpret other dreams? These dreams as we will read are from God. No one knows the mind of God except for God.

† **1 Cor 2:11** *For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.*

So then the only one that would be able to interpret these dreams is God Himself. But how will He do this? I'm sure you have a good idea of how since God did the same for the Butler and the Baker.

But back to the original question of why these magicians couldn't interpret the dreams. As we just learned it was because the dreams were from God. That's why it's so important not to go the world for the answer to your problems. How can they speak God's word unless they know God? One of the magician's jobs was to interpret dreams, just as there are people of the world who are counselors. Now they are ok for the world (But a lot of times they don't have the wisdom of God and will encourage divorce or taking the wrong way in a situation) but they are not OK for Christians.

Would you go to a satanic church to learn God's word?

Would you go to a Buddhist temple for the answer to salvation?

Would you go to a striptease parlor to make money?

I know these sound like stupid questions with the obvious answer for Christians being, no. So as Christians why would you go to the world for help for your marriage or financial problems when you can go straight to the One who created marriage and owns the whole world? If you are having problems, go to God's word for the answer or speak with another Christian.

✧ **Gen 41:9-13** ⁹ *Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I remember my faults this day. ¹⁰ "When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker, ¹¹ "we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. ¹² "Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream. ¹³ "And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him."*

Finally the Butler speaks up for Joseph. Remember this was two years later and if you think about it, this was probably a scary thing for the Butler to do, since he would be reminding the Pharaoh that he messed up two years ago, which could of made the Pharaoh mad again. But the Butler was willing to take the chance for someone who had done well for him.

Also notice that he just didn't say that there was a man that he knew that could interpret dreams, but gave the specifics of his interpretations and how they came to pass. This is what a witness does, he or she doesn't just tell of what was done in two or three words but tells more.

We as believers are to be witnesses for Jesus Christ and what He did in our lives. We don't just say that Jesus died for our sins, but we tell of how the Lord has changed us, and about the hell He has saved us from and the wrong path we were on and how the Lord put us on the right path to eternal life in heaven.

Some people may not know what you used to be like; all they see is the transformation now. So in order for them to understand what Jesus really did for you, you need to tell them of what you were like and how the Lord has transformed you into what you are now. Sure we're not perfect, but the Lord is doing a continual process of changing us.

✠ **Gen 41:14** *Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.*

Joseph was in prison for over two years, and we seem to think that because he found favor with the guards that he had it pretty good. But by reading this verse it doesn't seem to be the case. If he had to shave and change his clothes then he was pretty shabby looking. He was probably unable to shave for over two years and had probably worn the same clothes all this time. It's not like prison is today.

✠ **Psalm 105:17-18** *He sent a man before them-- Joseph--who was sold as a slave. They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons.*

I'm sure you have seen movies where men are stinky and dirty from being in prison for years during this time. The reason I bring this up is even though Joseph may have had it pretty bad, being in prison, dirty, stinky and unshaven for over two years, the Lord was with him the whole time.

How many times do we feel like that if we don't have everything we want, or we go through a little trial that the Lord is no longer with us? Maybe today you are feeling this way, but Joseph didn't and he was in prison for something he didn't do.

"Yea, but things worked out for Joseph, but not for me."

The reason we know things worked out for Joseph is because we have the bible, which tells us the whole story, but you have to remember that Joseph had no idea what was going on. He was obedient to the Lord, and he did what the Lord told him to, and still it seemed he was treated wrongfully. But this didn't discourage Joseph even though he didn't know what the end would bring. For all he knew he could have been hung just like the Baker was. But he also had God's promise in the dreams when he was younger and since this was from the Lord and hadn't come to pass yet, he knew the Lord was still with him.

We can't determine if the Lord is with us or not based on our prosperity and worldly possessions.

† **Heb 13:5-6** *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say:
"The LORD is my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?"*

The Lord will NEVER leave you or forsake you! You can leave Him, but He won't leave you!

The bible says;

† **James 1:2** *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,*

I know it's a hard thing to do, but if you always remember that the Lord is with you no matter what, then that's where your joy will be. Whether rich or poor, slave or free, a mighty Minister of the gospel or the janitor that no one sees. Joseph was unseen, but now the Lord has made Joseph seen by Pharaoh, and not only seen but now having Pharaoh seeking God's wisdom from Joseph.

✧ **Gen 41:15-16** ¹⁵ *And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it." ¹⁶ So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."*

Immediately Joseph gives the glory to the Lord; **God will give Pharaoh an answer**. Even after two years in prison, he's not holding a grudge against God. So the question you may have had through this is, "Does God speak to people in dreams today?"

The answer is in God's word, the bible!

† **Acts 2:17** *'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,
Your old men shall dream dreams.*

God says that in the last days the older men will dream dreams. This was not limited to the Old Testament. Here is one example in the New Testament.

† **Mat 2:11-12** *They entered the house where the child and his mother, Mary, were, and they fell down before him and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But when it was time to leave, they went home another way, because God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.*

So the answer according to scripture is, Yes, the Lord speaks to others in dreams. But just as with prophecy, they must be in line with the bible.

An example would be; if you had a dream that you were going to rob a bank and get away with it and be happy the rest of your life, this would not be a dream from God because it's against His word and commandments. Also, if you had a dream that you would marry someone that you knew, even though you were already married, this would also not be from God, since it's against His word once again.

What if you had a dream that you were going to be a big evangelist and save thousands with your teachings? This could be from God, but it doesn't mean you run out and quite your job and start reserving stadiums to preach there.

Remember that Joseph dreamed that his family would bow down to them and when he told this to his family, they rejected him and that was one reason he was where he was right now. No, God had to prepare Joseph for the calling that He had on his life, just as the Lord will prepare you too. So just because you feel a dream is from the Lord and it doesn't happen right away, doesn't mean it's not from the Lord, He may be preparing you for His will in your life. Also don't allow the dreams to consume you either or control your life. If it's from the Lord accept it and allow the Lord to do it in His way. If it comes to pass then it was from the Lord, and if not, then it wasn't from the Lord.

It's very possible that God revealed the dream and the interpretation to Joseph already. How do I know this? Read Joseph's response again.

"It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

Joseph said that the Lord would give Pharaoh an answer of peace. How would Joseph know this unless God had revealed it to him beforehand?

✂ **Gen 41:17-24** ¹⁷ *Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Behold, in my dream I stood on the bank of the river. ¹⁸ "Suddenly seven cows came up out of the river, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. ¹⁹ "Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt. ²⁰ "And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the first seven, the fat cows. ²¹ "When they had eaten them up, no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were just as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke. ²² "Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly seven heads came up on one stalk, full and good. ²³ "Then behold, seven heads, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. ²⁴ "And the thin heads devoured the seven good heads. So I told this to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."*

Pharaoh tells Joseph his dreams, and at the end, Pharaoh admits that he went to the world first for the answer to his dreams, but the world could not help him. So when all hope was lost, he now turns to the Lord for the answer.

✠ **Gen 41:25-36** ²⁵ Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do: ²⁶ "The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years; the dreams are one. ²⁷ "And the seven thin and ugly cows which came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind are seven years of famine. ²⁸ "This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. ²⁹ "Indeed seven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; ³⁰ "but after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will deplete the land. ³¹ "So the plenty will not be known in the land because of the famine following, for it will be very severe. ³² "And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. ³³ "Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. ³⁴ "Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. ³⁵ "And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. ³⁶ "Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not perish during the famine."

God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. Talk about a privilege and honor from the Lord, but this wasn't for Pharaoh's sake but for the sake of the people and the land.

God will allow seven years of great crop so that there will be plenty for all. But then afterwards there will be seven years of famine so that the food will no longer be there. God was allowing this for his purpose and what He would do 400 years later for the children of Israel.

"Well that's kind of mean and heartless of God to do such a thing to the people isn't it?"

No, because God also has made a provision for the people. It was up to them to listen to God and do what He said.

People always say, "How can a loving God send people to hell?" The same is true here also. God doesn't send any one to hell; it's his or hers own choice. God has given them the provision to get to heaven and that provision is Jesus Christ. Just as the people in Egypt could have rejected what God was telling them and starved to death, so it is with those who reject Jesus and go to hell, it's their own choice. God says that He doesn't want anyone to make this choice of eternity in hell

✠ **2 Peter 3:9** *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

But if God didn't give us all a choice, then there would be no freedom or choice. If I put two chocolate cakes in front of you and said to choose one, there is no choice, they are both the same. But if I put a carrot cake and a chocolate cake in front of you, then you would have a choice. It depends on which is more pleasing to you, which would determine which one you would take. (Personally I would take the chocolate cake over the carrot cake anytime.)

God does the same thing. He has put two options before you. The first is eternity in heaven with Him, just as it says:

† **Isaiah 25:8** *He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken.*

There is no more tears, hunger or pain.

The second is eternity in hell

† **Mark 9:44** **"where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'**

Sounds to easy of a choice? But the thing is thousands choose the second choice over the first one everyday. Why? Here are a few reasons from the bible.

† **Romans 1:24-25** ²⁴ *Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

† **2 Thess 2:9-12 (NLT)** ⁹ *This evil man will come to do the work of Satan with counterfeit power and signs and miracles. ¹⁰ He will use every kind of wicked deception to fool those who are on their way to destruction because they refuse to believe the truth that would save them. ¹¹ So God will send great deception upon them, and they will believe all these lies. ¹² Then they will be condemned for not believing the truth and for enjoying the evil they do.*

† **2 Tim 4:3-4 (NLT)** ³ *For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to right teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever they want to hear. ⁴ They will reject the truth and follow strange myths.*

Today people love to sin, even though they don't call it that, it just makes what they're doing seem dirty and they want to justify what they're doing. Maybe you have been trying to justify what you are doing even though you know it's not right. Today, God's wants you to open your eyes to the truth and reject the lie you have lived with for all these years.

- † **1 Tim 2:3-4** *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
- † **2 Cor 6:1-2** *We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says:
"In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you."
Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

We all make excuses and say, "I'll do it tomorrow" Today is yesterday's tomorrow. So then, if today is tomorrow, then you have no other excuse unless you just choose to reject God's plan of salvation for you.

Just admit that tomorrow has come and this will be the day that the Lord will hear you and save you. All it takes is talking to God and telling Him. Just like this simple prayer that you can pray from your heart right now!

Jesus, I admit I am a sinner, I have run from you all these years but now I want to stop running from you and run to you. Please forgive me for my sins. I believe that you are the Son of God, come in the flesh to die for me. Thank You Jesus for dieing for me on the cross and rising on the third day. Please fill me now with Your Holy Spirit and help me to live for You, because You died for me, and help me to tell others about You. I ask this in Your name Jesus. Amen!

If you just prayed this prayer from your heart, then you have made the right choice and will spend eternity in heaven with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. I would encourage you to tell someone what you just did or E-mail me and let me know that I may rejoice with you. Also I would encourage you to find a good church to start going to and if you don't know of one, I would be happy to help you find one in your area. Plus you probably have a hunger now to read your bible. I would encourage you to start out reading the book of John.

✠ **33** *"Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt*

It seems that Joseph is determining his own fate or suggestion himself to be the person who would do the things mentioned at the end of the interpretation. But you must remember that God is the one speaking through Joseph. I'm sure he never thought of himself as doing such a task to keep in order all this food for seven years and to be able to distribute it for the following seven years.

Just as God was showing Pharaoh what was going to happen, He was also showing Pharaoh what to do. Also notice God never said to have Joseph do these things. So then who will do them?
What will happen to Joseph?

Will he be thrown back in prison? We will find out next week, or read ahead in the rest of the chapter.

May God richly bless you as you spend time in His word and with Him everyday!