

# Genesis

## Chapter 41:37-57

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Last week we read of Pharaoh's dream with God using Joseph as His mouthpiece to reveal the meaning of the dreams to Pharaoh. When we ended the study it was at the end of the interpretation with God telling Pharaoh to have a man of wisdom oversee the collecting of food for seven years of plenty and distribution for the seven years of famine. Let's start out this week reading Pharaoh's response.

✧ **Gen 41:37-38** <sup>37</sup> *So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants.* <sup>38</sup> *And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?"*

Smart man this Pharaoh, acknowledging the Lord's counsel as good counsel. But now Pharaoh has to find such a man and he asks his servants if they know of such a man in Egypt.

✧ **Gen 41:39-44** <sup>39</sup> *Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you.* <sup>40</sup> *"You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you."* <sup>41</sup> *And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt."* <sup>42</sup> *Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.* <sup>43</sup> *And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!"* *So he set him over all the land of Egypt.* <sup>44</sup> *Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."*

Pharaoh figured that if the Lord had revealed this to Joseph then he must have been a wise man and chosen by God. So pharaoh makes Joseph second in command of Egypt, with no other man greater other than himself.

At this point Joseph's pride could have kicked in. Imagine having the president of the USA coming to you and saying that everyone in the USA had to listen to you and do what you say. They couldn't even marry or start a business without your OK. Think of your enemies or those who have done you wrong. Wouldn't you now have the opportunity to get back at them? What about old Potiphar or his wife? Weren't they the ones who had him thrown in prison? I bet they were shaking in their boots. But the bible doesn't say that Joseph got revenge against his enemies, not Potiphar or his wife. What about Joseph's brothers? We will find out later.

At various time in Genesis we have read of Joseph being done wrong and God also blessing Joseph. They started out small and got bigger as he went on. Ten years ago Joseph would not have been able to handle such a position. It was God preparing Joseph

for the work he was to do. God Knew exactly what Joseph could handle and at which time he could handle it.

✠ **1 Cor 10:13** *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

God knows you too. He knows what you can and can't handle. Maybe you're going through a trial at this very moment, wondering if you will make it or if God has left you. First off, God has not left you.

✠ **Heb 13:5b** *For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

Second God knows exactly what you can handle as we just read in 1 Cor 10:13. So if God knows you can handle it, don't despair, but rather trust in the Lord that He will see you through this trial as He did with other trials you have gone through. Also think about what you are going through or may have just gone through. Think back on your life and remember that you have gone through things like this before, only not as hard or severe. Notice that Joseph handled each one the same way by seeking the Lord and pleasing Him and not man. Think back on how you made it through your trials, and do the same also. Unless you fell into sin through those trials, then don't do the same thing, but rather learn by your mistakes and always seek the Lord and walk with Him!

So Joseph is given this new position, and he wasn't after his enemies or those whom did him wrong. So if he didn't want revenge, then what did he do? Let's read on and find out.

✠ **Gen 41:46-49** *<sup>46</sup> Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. <sup>47</sup> Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly. <sup>48</sup> So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them. <sup>49</sup> Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.*

Joseph had been in Egypt between ten to thirteen years now (see Gen 37). Ten or so years ago when his father Israel told him to check on his brothers, Joseph had no idea that he would end up being second in the land, only to Pharaoh. God was doing things in Joseph's life that he didn't understand at the time. Ten years of things going good and bad. Ten years of trials and temptations. Ten years of the Lord being with Joseph no matter what he was going through.

Where were you ten years ago?

I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior when I was 19 years old. For the past 40 years I have gone through a lot of trials and temptations. I have not always been

victorious in the past 40 years. In fact for a number of years I was a prodigal son walking from the truth seeking the things of the world. But about twenty years ago I returned to the Lord and He took me back with open arms. God has never turned His back on me nor has He ever left me. God has always loved me and God knew I would return. But even twenty years ago I had no idea I would be teaching the bible over the Internet, and I had no idea that the web site would contain so much and had grown into what it is today.

But I take NONE of the glory, but give it all to the Lord, who by His love, grace and mercy on my life has allowed me such an honor to share His word with others. Even as I write this down, I am listening to a song by "Tree63" titled "*look what You've done for me*" The chorus says, "*It's not a question of what you can do for me, what can I do for You my Lord?*"

My walk with the Lord is no longer, God do this or that for me. But rather, what do You want me to do for You my Lord. Why, Because God has loved me so much that He gave His only begotten Son for me so that I could spend eternity with Him in heaven.

Have you been a prodigal son or daughter, turning your back on the Lord? Today the Lord wants you to come home and He will also take you back with open arms. God loves you and is not angry with you. Read the story of the Prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 again and notice that the father of the son is never angry with the son nor does he turn his back on the son.

✠ **Luke 15:20** *And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.*

How much more will the Lord have compassion on His child who had strayed away?

✠ **Matt 18:12-14** *What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*

As a former prodigal son, I know how lonely and empty you are right now, not being able to find peace or comfort in the world. Maybe that's why God allowed me to go through what I have, so that I can share with you that you are not alone and not the first who has strayed away. Don't allow Satan to lie to you and tell you that God has totally rejected you, because He hasn't! God says to come home and He will not cast you out!

✠ **John 6:37** *All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.*

So how do you come back? Look at what the prodigal son did.

† **Luke 15:18-19** *I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.*

But when the son came to the father face to face, it wasn't what he expected.

† **Luke 15:21** *And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'*

The son was unable to get all the words out before he knew that the father had accepted him back. So it will be when you come back to the Lord. Pray to the Father, and as you confess your sins to Him, you will know that God has accepted you back. God's peace and comfort will return to you once again. That peace and comfort you were seeking from the world and couldn't find, you will find once again with the Father!

So Joseph had listened to God's counsel and did what God said to do concerning the taking up the food for the first seven years of plenty.

So why was Joseph given such a high standing in Egypt just to gather food for seven years and distribute it for the following seven years. I think the answer is in God's words and well as Pharaoh's who repeated God's words in a sense.

✚ **Gen 41:35** *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.*

✚ **Gen 41:44** *Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."*

God says that it must be under the authority of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh gave that authority to Joseph. If this authority were not given to Joseph, then many would have died, because without such an authority in Egypt, the people could have just blown Joseph off and not brought the grain for him to store. Therefore there wouldn't be enough food for all the people for the seven years of famine.

✚ **Gen 41:50-52** <sup>50</sup> *And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.* <sup>51</sup> *Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house."* <sup>52</sup> *And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."*

During these seven years of plenty, God not only blesses Joseph with his position in Egypt, but also blesses him with two sons named Manasseh which means: "Causing to forget" and Ephraim which means: "double ash-heap: I shall be doubly fruitful"

We will read more about the two sons' when we get to chapter 48 with Israel blessing the younger with his right hand and the older with his left hand. But Joseph also had to marry in order to have these two sons' and whom did he marry?

Asenath whose name means: *belonging to the goddess Neith*, who was the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. Who was this so called On? He was a sun god who the Egyptians worshipped. There was also a city in lower Egypt called On which was very likely built for the sun god.

Joseph named his son's in Honor of what God had done in his life with Manasseh being named because *"God has made me forget all my troubles and the family of my father."* (NLT) and Ephraim *"God has made me fruitful in this land of my suffering."*

✧ **Gen 41:53-57** <sup>53</sup> *Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended,* <sup>54</sup> *and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.* <sup>55</sup> *So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, do."* <sup>56</sup> *The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt.* <sup>57</sup> *So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands.*

Just as God had revealed to Joseph, after the seven years of plenty, now the seven years of famine has come. People no longer had food so they went to their leader Pharaoh, and Pharaoh sent them to Joseph who was in charge of the grain. This was also a wise thing done by Pharaoh, because he could have just distributed the food himself, but he knew that God had given Joseph the wisdom to handle the distributing of the grain and left it up to him.

You may have a high standing in the church or even at work, but this doesn't mean that you have to do everything yourself. I know people will go to our pastor for prayer, and he will sometimes direct them to another person who has had a similar situation in their life to pray with them. Not because our pastor doesn't care, but rather because he does care and wants the best to minister to that person.

This can be a pride thing where a person thinks that they have to do everything. If that is you, remember that God has put others around you to minister to different needs.

† **1 Cor 12:7-11** (NLT) <sup>7</sup>*A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.* <sup>8</sup> *To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another he gives the gift of special knowledge.* <sup>9</sup> *The Spirit gives special faith to another, and to someone else he gives the power to heal the sick.* <sup>10</sup> *He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and to another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to know whether it is really the Spirit of God or another spirit that is speaking. Still another person is given the*

*ability to speak in unknown languages, and another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. <sup>11</sup> It is the one and only Holy Spirit who distributes these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.*

Did you also notice that the famine was not only in Egypt, but also throughout the whole world? God was not only ministering or providing for Egypt, but also for the whole world. Just as God gave His only begotten Son for the whole world. Not just a chosen few.

✠ **John 3:16-17** *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*

So why would God allow this happen to the whole world and not just Egypt? The only reason I can come up with is that God knew that Israel would be held captive as slaves for 400 years in Egypt as we read about in past studies, and the way God got them there was through this famine. Think about it. If the famine was only in Egypt, then Joseph's brothers (As we will read next week) could have went somewhere else to get food and not Egypt. So Israel would never had known that his son was alive, the family would not have moved to Egypt and be held captive as God said they would.

I know I'm giving the story away by telling you these things. But I hope you have read through the whole book of Genesis already so know these things.

God also gave Joseph the wisdom, not just to hand out the grain but to sell it, and not only to the Egyptians but also the other countries that came for food. This would include Joseph's family. So will they come to Egypt for food, and when they do, will they recognize Joseph as their brother? Read chapter 42 and we will study this chapter next week to find out.

May God richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy!