

# **Patriarchal Age – The Patriarchs.**

**Genesis  
39:1; to 41:36;  
Joseph in Egypt.  
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# THE PATRIARCHAL AGE

**CREATION**  
**GARDEN of EDEN**  
**SACRIFICE FOR**  
***SIN***  
**WICKEDNESS**  
**THE FLOOD**  
**The DESCENDANTS**  
**ABRAHAM & ISAAC**  
**JACOB & JOSEPH**  
**JOSEPH IN EGYPT**  
**MOSES BIRTH**  
**MOSES FREES**  
**ISRAEL**

**God Spoke To the Fathers**



**Joseph in Egypt. Gen 39:1-41:36;**

**“JOSEPH IN EGYPT”** is an accurate title  
for the remainder of Joseph's life.

We shall see how **Joseph was sold into Egypt**  
and eventually how **he was exalted**  
**to second highest position overall Egypt.**

As we come to this chapter,  
**we are tempted to think that**  
**we are picking up where chapter 37 left off.**

That was the chapter where **Joseph**  
**was sold into Egypt** and now this chapter  
opens with him **coming into Egypt as a slave.**

# Joseph in Egypt. Gen 39:1-41:36;

But the author has been quite specific to insert the events of chapter 38; between these two Joseph narratives.

He does this for a reason. We are meant to see a contrast between chapters 38; and 39;

Genesis 38	Genesis 39
Tells the story of Judah's temptation by Tamar.	Tells the story of Joseph's temptation by Potiphar's wife.
Judah's test came from a Canaanite.	Joseph's test comes from an Egyptian.
Judah failed his temptation.	Joseph passed his test.

Genesis 39 contains a story that looks, from a human perspective, to be one of defeat.

<b>PROMISE</b>	<b>SEEMING DEFEAT.</b>	<b>SUPERNATURAL FULLFILLMENT.</b>
<b>Abraham's descendants will be a multitude.</b>	<b>He and Sarah are both barren and old.</b>	<b>A son is born in their old age.</b>
<b>Jacob is to be given rule over the land.</b>	<b>He becomes a fugitive in Haran.</b>	<b>He returns with great wealth.</b>
<b>Joseph your family will bow down to you.</b>	<b>A slave In the prison of a Foreign super power.</b>	<b>He is raised up to become the second in all of Egypt.</b>

<b>PROMISE</b>	<b>SEEMING DEFEAT.</b>	<b>SUPERNATURAL FULLFILLMENT.</b>
<b>Moses</b> you will lead your people out of bondage.	<b>Rejected</b> by Israelites; A fugitive in Midian.	<b>Leads Israel</b> out of Egypt and through the Red Sea.
<b>Jesus:</b> The kingdom of heaven is at hand.	Crucified, Dead and buried His disciples scattered.	Resurrection, Ascension. The giving of the Holy Spirit to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth.

## **Joseph in Egypt. Gen 39;**

**The contrast that we see between these two chapters is foundational to the purpose God has in bringing Jacob and his family down into Egypt.**

**The brothers of Joseph are in danger of losing their inheritance in the Lord as they integrate into the Canaanite society in which they live.**

**God is going to place them into a land that will keep them at arm's length and that will force them to be set apart from the pagan culture of the day.**

## **Joseph in Egypt. Gen 39;**

**This chapter opens amidst what looks to have been tragedy.**

**Joseph, the beloved son of Jacob, had been taken and sold into slavery in Egypt.**

**One could hardly imagine a lower standing in society than that of a slave.**

**Yet by the end of this chapter, Joseph will have been brought even lower. He will be a slave in prison.**

**You've heard of Murphy's Law.**

**It says that anything that can go wrong will go wrong.**

**Petrov's Law; Says that Murphy was an optimist.**

## **Joseph in Egypt. Gen 39;**

**But this is not a story of things going wrong.  
That is too narrow a view of this passage.**

**The bigger picture will be how God took things  
that went wrong and used those circumstances  
to work something magnificently good.**

**The story of Joseph is an example of the truth  
that God causes all things to work together  
for good to those who love God, to those  
who are called according to His purpose.  
(Romans 8:28;)**

## **Joseph in Egypt. Gen 39;**

**Joseph was such a man. How do we know?**

**Because of what is repeated  
throughout this chapter as a continuing refrain:**

**The LORD was with Joseph, so he became a successful man.  
(39:2;) Now his master saw that the LORD was with him  
and how the LORD caused  
all that he did to prosper in his hand. (39:3;)**

**But the LORD was with Joseph  
and extended kindness to him, and gave him  
favour in the sight of the chief jailer. (39:21;)**

**The chief jailer did not supervise anything under  
Joseph's charge because the LORD was with him;  
and whatever he did, the LORD made to prosper.  
(Genesis 39:23;)**

**When GOD is with us, bad things can still happen. Gen 39:1;**

**The story of Joseph is more than a story about Joseph.** It is the story of God and what He does when He is with a man or a woman.

**Joseph had thus far been obedient to his father and to the Lord.**

The Genesis account give no hint that he had been filled with pride at the dreams he had been given and his reporting of them was the reporting of the revelation of God.

**When GOD is with us, bad things can still happen. Gen 39:1;**

**In spite of Joseph's faithfulness,  
we see him taken, thrown into a pit,  
and then sold into slavery.**

**Neither was it a slavery from which he  
could ever hope to escape, for he was taken  
to a strange land where a different language  
was spoken and where there would be  
no ordinary means of redemption.**

**We ought to consider what life in Egypt  
was like during that day. Egypt was  
the most advanced kingdom in the world.**

**When GOD is with us, bad things can still happen. Gen 39:1;**

**The pyramids were already a thousand years old when Joseph came to Egypt.**

**The land of the Nile was the breadbasket of the ancient world. It was also the centre of culture and learning for the ancient world**

**Furthermore, Joseph was not placed into a backwoods section of Egypt.**

**He was brought into the house of Potiphar. Potiphar was the captain of the bodyguard. That would have placed him in the capital city.**

**When GOD is with us, bad things can still happen. Gen 39:1;**

**Think about what this would mean to Joseph.**  
He was faced with the most advanced science  
of the day who held to views that sharply  
contrasted his belief in the God of his fathers.

**He faced a "modern" educational system,**  
a highly advanced philosophical system  
and **a high culture,** all of which  
were directly opposed to his faith in Yahweh

**We live in a world that is somewhat similar today.**

We live in a world that prides itself  
In its scientific achievements  
and, to be sure, we have accomplished  
some wonderful scientific breakthroughs.

**When GOD is with us, bad things can still happen. Gen 39:1;**

**We have a modern educational system that has set itself up to be deliberately void of any mention of the God of the universe.**

**We do not say these things to make you lose heart or to shake your head and to bemoan the condition of the world.**

**The world has ALWAYS been that way.**

**I say these things so that you will realize that God can work through you in today's world just as He worked through Joseph in Egypt.**

**When God is with us, others will notice. Gen 39:2-4;**

**“And the LORD was with Joseph,  
so he became a successful man.**

**And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.”**

**“Now his master saw that the LORD was with him and how  
the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand.”**

**“So Joseph found favour in his sight, and became  
his personal servant; and he made him overseer  
over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge.”  
(Genesis 39:2-4;)**

**Notice that **we do not have to wait**  
until the last verse of this chapter to see  
that God was with Joseph. **It is mentioned**  
**here in 39:2; God was with Joseph.****

**When God is with us, others will notice. Gen 39:2-4;**

**As a result of this divine presence,  
Joseph enjoyed success in the house of Potiphar.**

**It is readily apparent to this pagan slave owner  
that Joseph enjoyed success in each of his duties.**



**When God is with us, others will notice. Gen 39:2-4;**

**If God is with you, then people will eventually begin to notice that something is different.**

**When they ask you what it is,  
you be sure to tell them about**

**the One whose presence makes a difference.**

**If God is with us, we can be a blessing to others. Gen 39:5-6;**

**“And it came about that from the time he made him overseer in his house, and over all that he owned, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph; thus the LORD'S blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field.”**

**“So he left everything he owned in Joseph's charge; and with him there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.”**



**If God is with us, we can be a blessing to others. Gen 39:5-6;**

**We have already seen that God was with Joseph and that God was prospering Joseph, but now we see that something else was added to the equation.**

**Potiphar's house also began to prosper. 39:5; says that both his house and his field and everything he owned was blessed by the Lord.**

**That is an amazing statement.**

**To the best of our knowledge,**

**Potiphar continued to be a pagan idol-worshiper, yet God was blessing him in some very visible ways.**

**If God is with us, we can be a blessing to others. Gen 39:5-6;**

**Here is the principle. God not only blesses His people, but He also blesses those who are connected to His people.**

**This is seen in marriage:** For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband. (1 Cor 7:14;)

**Being a Christian who is married to an unbeliever may be rough. But it need not make that Christian defiled.**

**Quite to the contrary, the very opposite ought to be true.** The unbelieving partner is sanctified by this union to a believer.

**If God is with us, we can be a blessing to others. Gen 39:5-6;**

**Does this mean that you can be saved  
by being married to a Christian? No.**

**But it does mean that God  
has set apart the family of a Christian  
for some special blessings.**

**When a person becomes a Christian  
even your dog should notice the difference  
and benefit from the new relationship**

**If God is with us, we can be a blessing to others. Gen 39:5-6;**

**This principle is also seen in the effect upon Children: For otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy. (1 Cor 7:14;)**

**A child is not saved just because they have a Christian parent.**

**But they are set apart for some special blessings by having such a Christian parent.**

**They are set apart for prayer.**

**They are set apart to witness a Christian life up close.**

**They are set apart to hear the message of the gospel.**

**If God is with us, we can be a blessing to others. Gen 39:5-6;**

**This principle is also seen in the case of the relationship of Jacob with his uncle Laban.**

**After Jacob had worked for Laban for 14 years, Laban bore witness, saying, “The Lord has blessed me on your account.” (Gen 30:25;)**

**Laban recognized that there was a supernatural presence that was bringing him prosperity. He attributed it to the blessing of the Lord.**

**If God is with us, we can be a blessing to others. Gen 39:5-6;**

**This principle is also seen  
when God offered to reprieve the destruction  
of the wicked city of Sodom  
if there were only ten righteous people in the city.**

**The presence of ten of God's people  
within the city would have saved it  
from destruction. (Genesis 18:32;)**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10; Joseph was very handsome and Potiphar's wife took notice. (39:7;) She pleaded with him to lie with her. Joseph resisted the temptation.**

**“Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. And it came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, “Lie with me.”**

**“But he refused and said to his master's wife, “Behold, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge.”**

**“There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?”**

**“It came about as she spoke to Joseph day after day, that he did not listen to her to lie beside her, or be with her.”**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

Back in 39:1; **Potiphar** was described as an officer of Pharaoh. The Hebrew word **syris** is often used to refer to **a eunuch**.

(See 2 Kings 9:32; 20:18; Esther 2:3; Isaiah 56:3-4;)

It was customary in the ancient world to require **leading officers** in the king's court to be castrated.

This was to **insure devotion to duties** and to **minimize the possibility** that **one might try to take over the government** and establish his own dynasty.

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

**If this was the case with Potiphar,  
then it would have meant one of two things:-**

**1) He consented to this operation  
after he was married in order to acquire his office.**

**2) His wife married him for political reasons  
rather than for normal marriage relations.**

**Though this does not justify the sin  
that was contemplated,  
it makes the temptation understandable.**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**



**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

**Joseph was a young man.**

**He was away from home with no one to report in on him and he was being offered sexual gratification.**

**Yet he refused and he refused consistently.**

**Joseph did not succumb to the temptation of Potiphar's wife because he realized that such a sin would be a breach of faith against that which had been entrusted to him.**

**He points out that Potiphar had put all of his possessions into his hands and he felt a duty to keep that trust.**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

There is something about **trust** that tends  
**To help us to want to keep that trust.**

When someone turns to you and says,  
**“I am trusting you with my very life,”**  
your natural tendency is going to be  
**a desire to live up to that trust.**

Of course, **whether you actually follow through**  
**on such a trust** depends upon  
how trustworthy you are,  
**but the desire to be trusted lives in most of us.**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

**Did we ever stop to think about  
how God has entrusted us?**

**We normally speak of our trusting the Lord  
and that is certainly the basis  
for our relationship with Him.**

**But the Bible also speaks of how God has  
entrusted us with the message of the Gospel.**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

**1 Thessalonians 2:4; says:-  
“that we have been approved by God  
to be entrusted with the gospel.”**

**In 1 Timothy 1:11; Paul speaks of how  
“he has been entrusted with the glorious gospel  
of the blessed God.” (See also Titus 1:3;)**

**Timothy is warned “to guard that  
which had been entrusted to him.”  
(1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:14;)**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

**We have been given a trust.  
It is the message of the gospel.**

**We have been given that message,  
not merely to bury it in our hearts,  
but also to spread it out to the world.**

**How do we know that?**

**Because Jesus told a story of a master  
who entrusted a great treasure to his servants.**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

**The story is found in Matthew 25:14-30;**

**The master is about to go on a journey,  
but before he leaves, he entrusts  
various amounts of talents to his servants.**

**Even a single talent was a great deal of wealth.**

**Each of the faithful servants  
took their talents out and utilized them.**

**One servant did not. He took his talent  
and he buried it in the ground.**

**The message was not proclaimed.**

**The gospel was not preached.**

**The seeds of the kingdom bore no fruit.**

**If God is with us, temptations lose their luster. Gen 39:7-10;**

We are living in a day and an age when **society** denies such is sin as **“between two consenting adults.”**

**Such an outlook forgets that all sin is ultimately against God.**

Following his adultery with Bathsheba and his subsequent murder of Uriah,

David prays, **“Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, And done what is evil in Thy sight.” Psa 51:4**

**David knew the truth that is echoed here in the words of Joseph; that sin is ultimately against God.**

**If God is with us, the accuser looks to attack. Gen 39:11-19;**

**“Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. And she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside.”**

**“When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and had fled outside, she called to the men of her household, and said to them, See, he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make sport of us; he came in to me to lie with me, and I screamed.”**

**“And it came about when he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, that he left his garment beside me and fled, and went outside. So she left his garment beside her until his master came home.”**

**If God is with us, the accuser looks to attack. Gen 39:11-19;**

**“Then she spoke to him with these words,  
The Hebrew slave, whom you brought to us,  
came in to me to make sport of me;”**

**“it happened as I raised my voice and screamed,  
that he left his garment beside me and fled outside.”**

**“Now it came about when his master heard the words  
of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying,  
This is what your slave did to me, that his anger burned.”**

**The actions of Potiphar’s wife speaks volumes  
to the selfishness of the sort of affair she sought.**

**If God is with us, the accuser looks to attack. Gen 39:11-19;**

**She isn't interested in Joseph's well-being.  
She is only interested in self-satisfaction.**

**Her pride has been hurt, her reaction is to get even.**

**Did you notice the central role that  
Joseph's garment played in this scenario?**

**It wasn't the first time.**

**The last time we saw Joseph  
when he was back in Canaan, the issue  
had also been an article of clothing.**

**If God is with us, the accuser looks to attack. Gen 39:11-19;**

<b>In Canaan</b>	<b>In Egypt</b>
<b>The coat of many colours had been taken by his brothers.</b>	<b>His servant's garment is taken by Potiphar's wife.</b>
<b>His brothers used the coat to deceive Jacob.</b>	<b>Potiphar's wife used the garment to deceive her husband.</b>
<b>The result of the deception was that Joseph was sold as a slave to Egypt.</b>	<b>The result of the deception was that Joseph was sent to the king's prison.</b>

**Before the story is finished,  
there will be more on this theme of clothing.**

**We will ultimately see Joseph's  
prison garments removed and replaced  
by those suitable to the court of Pharaoh.**

**If God is with us, the accuser looks to attack. Gen 39:11-19;**

**There is a similar vision in the prophets that present the image of an accusation made on the basis of clothing.**

**It could call it the vision of the worst-dressed sinner.**

**“Then he showed me Joshua the high priest  
Standing before the angel of the LORD,  
and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.”**

**The LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan!  
Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!  
**Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”****

**“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments  
and standing before the angel. He spoke and said  
to those who were standing before him,  
“Remove the filthy garments from him.”**

**If God is with us, the accuser looks to attack. Gen 39:11-19;**

**“He said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.” (Zechariah 3:1-4;)**

**The vision of Zechariah is of a high priest,  
the person who represents  
the people before the Lord.**

**He is being accused by Satan himself.  
Furthermore, it is a just accusation.**

**The accusation is supported by the fact  
that the high priest is wearing filthy garments.**

**That isn't what he is supposed to be wearing.  
He is supposed to be wearing clean, white linen.**

**If God is with us, the accuser looks to attack. Gen 39:11-19;**

**You see, the difference between  
Joseph and us is that **Satan**  
does not have to falsely accuse us.**

**There is plenty of things  
which we can be truly accused off.**

**But the Lord says, “It is okay;  
I took those dirty robes and paid the penalty  
for them. I wore them in your place  
and I have given you  
my own pure robes of righteousness.”**

**Even adversities can be blessings in disguise. Gen 39:20-23;**

**“So Joseph's master took him and put him into the jail,  
the place where the king's prisoners were confined;  
and he was there in the jail. (Genesis 39:20;)**

**There is no trial.**

**Potiphar does not cross-examine Joseph  
or even ask him what happened.**

**The law of Egypt did not demand such action.**

**A slave was considered  
mere property and had **no rights.****

**Even adversities can be blessings in disguise. Gen 39:20-23;**

**Joseph goes from being a slave  
to being even lower than a slave.**

**He goes into the jail; into the place  
where the king's prisoners were confined.**

**This was the place where you were put if the  
Pharaoh of all of Egypt were displeased with you.**

**God had promised through Joseph's dreams  
that he would someday rule over his brothers.  
Instead, he finds himself in prison in Egypt.**

**Psalm 105:18 tells us:-**

**“They afflicted his feet with fetters,  
He himself was laid in irons.”**

**The situation seems absolutely impossible.**

**Even adversities can be blessings in disguise. Gen 39:20-23;**



**Even adversities can be blessings in disguise. Gen 39:20-23;**

**Is that bad? Yes, it was, but even this adversity would eventually become a blessing.**

If Joseph had never been put into prison, then **he would have ended his days as a slave in Potiphar's household** instead of rising to become the number two man in all of Egypt.

**May 11, 1996 was a bad day for one man.**

He stopped by a vending machine, put in his money, and **got nothing for his trouble.**

He made it **late** to the gate, **only to find that he had missed his flight.**

**Even adversities can be blessings in disguise. Gen 39:20-23;**

**He went up to one of the clerks to complain  
and only then learned  
That his troubles had saved his life.**

**Value jet Flight 592 had crashed in the Everglades.  
There were no survivors.  
What had looked to be adversity  
had saved this man's life.**

**“The LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him,  
and gave him favour in the sight of the chief jailer.”**

**If God is with us, we will prosper in his work. Gen 39:21-23;**

**“The chief jailer committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners who were in the jail; so that whatever was done there, he was responsible for it.”**

**“The chief jailer did not supervise anything under Joseph's charge because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made to prosper. (Gen 39:21-23;)**

**Even when he is in prison, Joseph continues to prosper as the Lord is with him.**

**Notice that this is more than mere moralism.**

**This is not merely a case of saying that:-  
"good character and leadership traits  
will always get you to the top."**

**If God is with us, we will prosper in His work. Gen 39:21-23;**



**If God is with us, we will prosper in His work. Gen 39:21-23;**

**The reason for Joseph's prosperity  
is directly related to the work of God.**

**The Lord was with Joseph.**

**The Lord extended kindness to Joseph.**

**The Lord gave Joseph favour  
in the sight of the chief jailer.**

**Joseph laboured as Slave,  
but was faithful in hard places.**

**This is not just a story about Joseph.**

**It is a story about the Lord  
and about His workings in the lives of men.**

**If God is with us, we will prosper in his work. Gen 39:21-23;**

**We have been looking at Joseph as a man whose life manifested the presence of God.**

**We noted in verse 23 that God was with him.**

**How wonderful would it be if the same thing could be said about us! It can.**

**Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, the prophet Isaiah foretold the birth of one who would be Immanuel – “God with us.”**

## **PRISON PROPHECIES. Gen 40;**

**Life is full of detours, You know what they are.**

You are out for a drive and you have to get from point "A" to point "B" and you come across a sign that tells you that **you cannot take the route you had planned.**

Instead, you have to take an alternate route that **takes you out of your way.**

**Detours are not pleasant,** but they are often necessary. When a driver takes a detour, he often discovers that, by doing so, **he has bypassed a very treacherous and impossible situation.**

If he follows the detour patiently, he eventually comes back out onto the main road and finds that he has advanced in the direction of his final destination.

## **PRISON PROPHECIES. Gen 40;**

**Detours are inevitable in the Christian life.**

**They are often a part of the growth  
of our Christian character.**

**We have been following the career of Joseph.  
It has been a career with its share of detours.**

**He began as the favourite son of his father,  
a fact not unnoticed by his jealous half-brothers.**

**To make matters worse, he was given  
several dreams from the Lord that indicated  
he would one day rule over the entire clan.**

## **PRISON PROPHECIES. Gen 40;**

In a short time, **he went from beloved son to bond slave.** His ruler's robe was traded for the chains of servitude.

He was transported like a cow or a sheep to a foreign land and **sold to the highest bidder.**

Then if things were not already bad enough, **he was falsely accused by his master's wife of attempted rape.**

His side of the story was not heard. **There was no trial;** he was simply cast into the prison.

## **PRISON PROPHECIES. Gen 40;**

What was happening? From a human perspective, Joseph's life seems completely off track from the original vision given by God. **Things had gone from bad to worse to the most extreme futility.**

But from God's perspective, this was a part of a grand design.

**What looks like a detour is really the master plan.**

While the scriptures do not specifically state this to be the case:-

**This prison detour in the life of Joseph was instrumental in building his character.**

**There are some things Joseph needed to learn in prison.**

**PRISON PROPHECIES.** Gen 40;

**Joseph needed to learn to trust the Lord  
in the midst of a hopeless situation.**

**This is a lesson in patient persistence.**

**Joseph learned humility in prison.** Before the chapter  
is over, we shall see that **Joseph is assigned  
to serve as a slave** to certain prisoners.

**Just when it appears he could descend  
no lower** in the social caste system,  
**a new level of low is achieved.**

**Joseph continued to learn faithfulness.  
He continues to prove his faithfulness  
in little things so that ultimately  
he will be faithful in large things.**

## **TWO NEW PRISONERS. Gen 40:1-4;**

**“Then it came about after these things the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. Pharaoh was furious with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker.”**

**“So he put them in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, in the jail, the same place where Joseph was imprisoned.”**

**“And the captain of the bodyguard put Joseph in charge of them, and he took care of them; and they were in confinement for some time.”**

## **TWO NEW PRISONERS.** Gen 40:1-4;

We are **not told how long** Joseph was in prison before he was joined by two new prisoners.

**They were officials from the court of Pharaoh.**

We have already noted that this term is sometimes used to refer to one who is a eunuch. That was likely the case here.

**This was a land where assassination through poisoning was popular.**

The position these two men held could come under no cloud of suspicion.

## **TWO NEW PRISONERS.** Gen 40:1-4;

40:1; says that they had offended their lord  
the Hebrew uses the basic word 'chata'  
to say that **they had sinned.**

We are not told what these two men had done  
to arouse the wrath of the king.  
Something had taken place to bring them  
to this point of disfavour.

They were placed in confinement  
**in the house of the captain of the bodyguard.** (40:3;)

Here we learn something about  
**Joseph's imprisonment** that was  
not mentioned in the previous chapter.

## **TWO NEW PRISONERS. Gen 40:1-4;**

When Joseph was thrown into prison,  
**it was the prison over which Potiphar had oversight.**

He was more than merely a warden, but  
**the warden of the prison was under his command.**

Now these two court officials were placed  
into the keeping of the prison.  
**Their ultimate fate was as yet undetermined.**

They might eventually be restored to their positions  
of honour and power or they might continue in disfavour.  
In any case, it would do well to treat them with care,  
so **Joseph was in effect, to be a slave to these  
two prisoners and to see to their needs.**

**TWO DREAMS IN THE NIGHT. Gen 40:5-8;**

**“Then the cupbearer and the baker  
for the king of Egypt, who were confined in jail,  
both had a dream the same night,  
each man with his own dream  
and each dream with its own interpretation.**

When Joseph came to them in the morning  
and observed them, **behold, they were dejected.**

“Joseph asked Pharaoh's officials who were  
with him in confinement in his master's house,  
**Why are your faces so sad today?”**

“Then they said to him, “We have had a dream  
and there is no one to interpret it.” Then Joseph  
said to them, **Do not interpretations belong to God?  
Tell it to me, please.”**

## **TWO DREAMS IN THE NIGHT.** Gen 40:5-8;

There are only two Hebrews in the Old Testament who are recorded as being able to interpret these sort of puzzling dreams.

**The first is Joseph. The second is Daniel.**

**Each** was forcefully taken from the land of his birth while still a youth. **Each** served a pagan monarch.

**Each** was in a civilization that held the interpretation of dreams in high regard.

**In each case,** the interpreter was careful to disclaim any innate ability, **attributing all such interpretations to God.**

## **TWO DREAMS IN THE NIGHT. Gen 40:5-8;**

**As we read this account,  
we may be asked the question,  
Does God still speak through dreams today?**

**Of course, we could merely answer that  
God is ABLE to speak through dreams  
if He so desires. God is God  
and He is able to do whatsoever He desires.**

**But IS He generally  
speaking through dreams today?**

## **TWO DREAMS IN THE NIGHT. Gen 40:5-8;**

**On the one hand,** the Old Testament warns against those who listen to dreams and thereby falsely prophesy in the name of the Lord.  
(Jeremiah 29:8-9;)

**On the other hand,** Peter quotes the Old Testament prophecy of the coming of the Spirit and how “your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” (Acts 2:18;)

The answer is to say that the Lord does not normally give special revelation through dreams.

**Why do we say such a thing?**

## **TWO DREAMS IN THE NIGHT. Gen 40:5-8;**

**Because dreams have been replaced, superseded  
by a more sure word from the Lord.**

**Today we have the completed Scriptures  
to tell us what is God's word for us.**

**The problem with the modern claims  
of interpretation of dreams is that you can never  
be certain whether the dream is from God  
or whether it is a deceptive dream  
as described by Jeremiah 29:8-9;**

**or whether it is merely the result of indigestion  
and an over-active imagination.**

**It will be of much greater profit for us to hold instead  
to the sure word of God as found in the Scriptures.**

## **TWO DREAMS IN THE NIGHT. Gen 40:5-8;**

Having said that, let us go on to admit  
that there have been many times  
when **people have been moved  
to do the right thing through dreams.**

There is nothing necessarily wrong with this  
**as long as such actions are in accord with Scripture.**

There are people who **dreamed of going to hell,  
Who were moved to repent and believe the gospel.**

We have no basis to discern the value of the dream,  
but **at least the correct action that resulted.**

## **TWO DREAMS IN THE NIGHT. Gen 40:5-8;**

**In Joseph's case, it is interesting that he even shows interest in hearing the dreams of these two men.**

**After all, his dreams had only gotten him into trouble in the past.**

**Joseph shows no bitterness of the past. Joseph shows no pride in his present ability.**

**Instead, he continues to give the glory to God for any interpretation that might be forthcoming.**



## **THE DREAM OF THE CUP BEARER . Gen 40:9-13;**

So the **chief cupbearer** told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, **In my dream, behold, there was a vine in front of me;**

“on the vine were three branches.  
And as it was budding, its blossoms came out,  
and its clusters produced ripe grapes.”

“Now Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; so I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I put the cup into Pharaoh's hand.”

“Then Joseph said to him, “This is the interpretation of it: the three branches are three days;”

“**within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office;** and you will put Pharaoh's cup into his hand according to your former custom when you were his cupbearer.”

## **THE DREAM OF THE CUP BEARER . Gen 40:9-13;**

The meaning of this dream seems to be fairly straightforward. The Chief Cupbearer might have been **puzzled** over the aspect of the three branches.

**The rest of his dream pictured him doing the very service his position demanded.**

**Accordingly, Joseph interprets the dream by showing that the cupbearer shall be returned to his former position.**

## **JOSEPH'S REQUEST. Gen 40:14-15;**

**Joseph asks a favour from the Chief Cupbearer.**

**It is that he keep Joseph in mind  
and that he speak a kind word in Joseph's behalf  
in the hearing of the Pharaoh.**

**There are some who say that Joseph's request  
is wrong because he is placing his faith  
in the ability and in the memory  
of the chief cupbearer rather than in the Lord.**

**Yet the Lord had brought the situation about  
and it was not wrong to make this request.**

**On the other hand, we see that Joseph's request  
would go two full years without an answer.**

**JOSEPH'S REQUEST. Gen 40:14-15;**

**We do not know what news  
filtered back down to the prison,  
but Joseph must have felt a bit abandoned.**

**It is bad enough to be abandoned,  
but to be abandoned by one  
you once helped seems all the worse.**

**THE DREAM OF THE BAKER.** Gen 40:16-19;

“When **the chief baker** saw that he had interpreted favourably, he said to Joseph,  
“I also saw in my dream, and behold, there were **three baskets of white bread on my head;**”

“In the top basket there were some of all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, and the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head.”

Then Joseph answered and said, **“This is its interpretation:** the three baskets are three days;

“within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and **will hang you on a tree;** and the birds will eat your flesh off you.”

## **THE DREAM OF THE BAKER. Gen 40:16-19;**

**The dream of the baker would not have been quite so easily interpreted.**

**He asks Joseph about the meaning of his dream only after hearing the favourable interpretation of the chief cupbearer's dream.**

**Perhaps he thought that Joseph was on a favourable roll and that such a tendency would bring him luck.**

**THE DREAMS FULFILLED.** Gen 40:20-23;

“Thus it came about on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants.”

“He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand; but he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them.”

“Yet **the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.**”

## **THE DREAMS FULFILLED. Gen 40:20-23;**

**The fulfillment to both of these dreams took place on the third day.** We are not told that one of these officials was found to be innocent while the other was judged guilty by any testimony or evidence.

**Rather, the occasion for these actions was the Pharaoh's birthday.**

In all of **his sovereign majesty** as the **"lord of the two lands,"** he could execute or he could free at a single command.

**Yet he was ultimately acting in accordance to that which had been foretold by the Lord.**  
**(Proverbs 21:1;)**

## **THE DREAMS FULFILLED. Gen 40:20-23;**

**In spite of the success of this fulfillment, this chapter closes upon the note of seeming defeat.**

**Instead of proclaiming the victory of the God of Joseph, the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him. (40:23;)**

**It must have felt as though release had come so close, only to fail due to flagrant forgetfulness.**

**As we ponder this seeming defeat, we ought to remember that the Lord delights in bringing His success on the heels of such a defeat.**

## The Promise

## Apparent Defeat

## Supernatural Fulfillment

**Abraham:** Your descendants will be a great multitude.

He and Sarah are both barren and old.

A son is born in their old age.

**Jacob:** ruler ship over the land.

He becomes a fugitive in Haran.

He returns with great wealth.

**Joseph:** Your family will bow down to you.

A slave in the prison of a foreign Superpower.

He is raised up to become the second in all of Egypt.

**Moses:** You will lead your country out of bondage.

Rejected by Israelites, becomes a fugitive in Midian

Leads Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea.

**Jesus:**  
The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

Crucified, dead and buried; His disciples scattered.

Resurrection; Ascension; the giving of the Holy Spirit to spread the gospel to ends of earth.

## **LESSONS FROM GENESIS 40:1-23;**

**This is not just their story. It is our story too.**  
**We have a promise of our heavenly inheritance.**  
**It is the summation of all that we have in Christ.**

**In the meantime, we struggle with our frailties  
and with abiding sin and with our weaknesses.**

**Our ultimate fulfillment shall only take place  
when we see Jesus. “When Christ, who is our life,  
is revealed, then you also will be revealed  
with Him in glory.” (Colossians 3:4;)**

## **LESSONS FROM GENESIS 40:1-23;**

**In each of the above examples, Satan offers a temptation;** an alternate means of accomplishing the same goal.

**In each case, Satan offers what appears to be a potential short-cut.**

**Abraham:** Take Hagar and have a son by her.

**Jacob:** Bargain for the birthright and steal the family blessing.

## LESSONS FROM GENESIS 40:1-23;

**Joseph:** Sleep with Potiphar's wife and use the situation to gain some leverage.

**Moses:** Murder the Egyptian Taskmaster and deliver the people of Israel through force of arms.

**Jesus:** "Bow down before me and I will give you all of the kingdoms of the earth." (Matthew 4:9;)

## LESSONS FROM GENESIS 40:1-23;

In each case, Satan says,  
“Don’t take the long way. Don’t take  
what looks to be God’s long detour.

Take my way instead.  
I will give you instant gratification.  
Instant success.

Satan offers what appears to be the easy way,  
but **it is in reality an easy road to destruction.**

Matt 7:13-14;

## PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41;

Joseph was a young man with an old dream.

The dream that he had been given was that there would come a day when all would bow down before him.

It was that very dream that got him into trouble and now his troubles had gone from bad to worse.

He had been sold as a slave to Egypt and then, when the wife of his Egyptian master accused him of attempted rape, he was summarily thrown into prison.

## **PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41;**

**A year passed. And then another.**

**We do not know exactly how long he was in prison,  
but it was **at least two years**  
and possibly considerably longer.**

**Joseph had faced a number of tests  
and had passed them all.**

**He faced the test of rejection from his brothers.  
He faced the test of humiliation when he was sold  
into Egypt as a slave.**

## **PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41;**

**He faced the test of sexual temptation**  
when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him.  
**He faced the test of being falsely accused.**

**He faced the test of suffering innocently**  
as he was thrown into prison.

**He faced the test of depression**  
when the man to whom he had brought comfort  
conveniently forgot him for two years.

## **PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41;**

**Before this chapter is over,  
we will see Joseph facing another test.**

**It is the test of prosperity. It is a test  
that attempts to corrupt a person's character.**

**There is an old saying that says,  
“Power corrupts and absolute power  
corrupts absolutely.” That isn't quite right.**

**The truth is that power corrupts and  
absolute power corrupts the corruptible.**

## PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41;

**The original dream of Joseph**  
had been of an exalted position  
in which all bowed down before him.

Just as **a series of dreams** had brought about  
the circumstances that **led to Joseph's**  
**initial slavery**, now it is **again a series of dreams**  
that **lead to his eventual release**.

## **PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS.** Gen 41:1-8;

**“Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile.”**

**“And lo, from the Nile there came up seven cows, sleek and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass.”**

**“Then behold, seven other cows came up after them from the Nile, ugly and gaunt, and they stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile.”**

**“The ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke.”**

**In Pharaoh's dream the seven fat cows were eaten by seven lean cows.**



**PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS.** Gen 41:1-8;

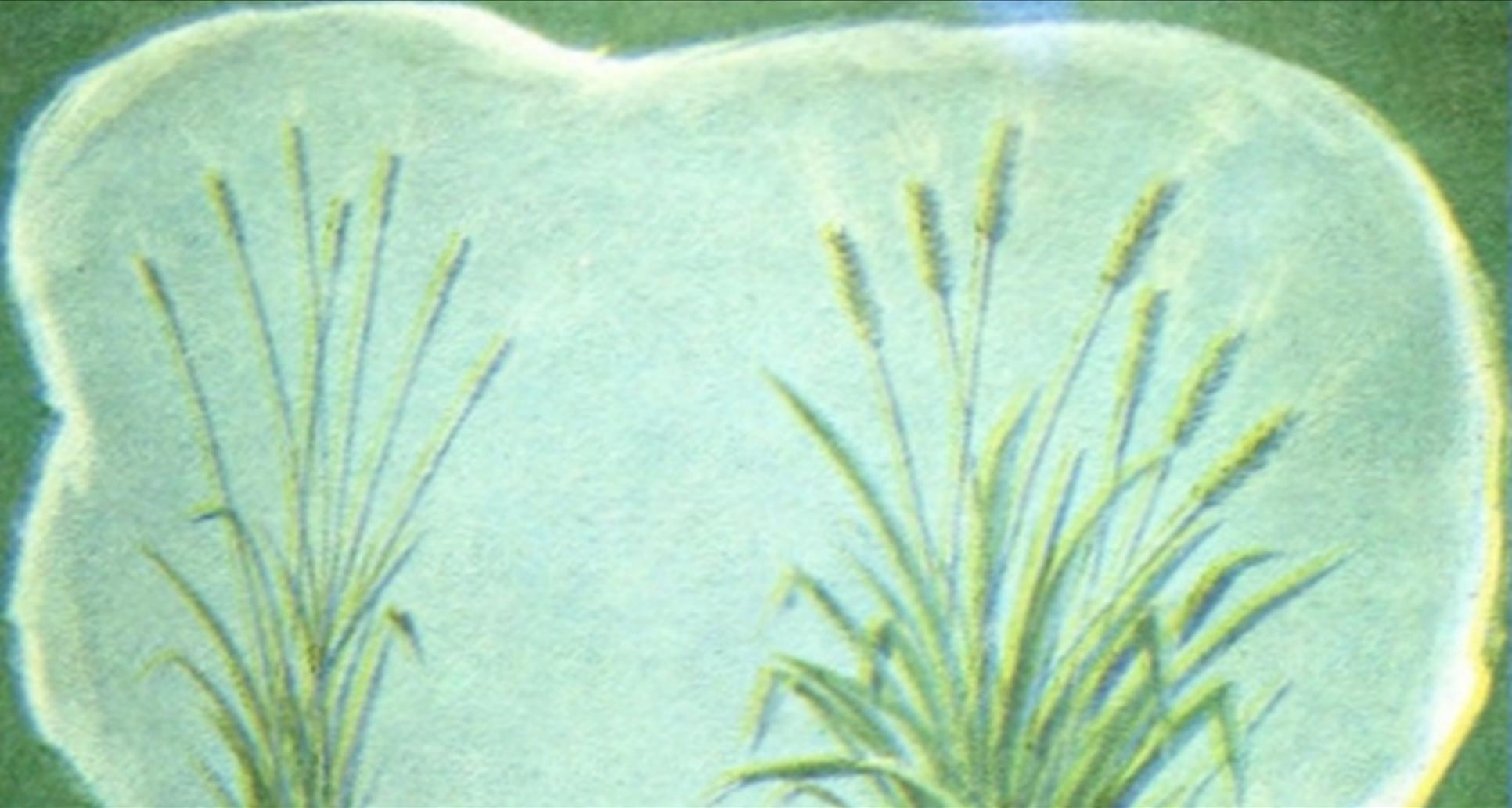
**“He fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good.”**

**“Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them.”**

**“The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream.”**

**“Now it came about in the morning that his spirit was troubled, so 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 to Pharaoh.”**

**Second dream Pharaoh saw seven full ears of grain  
swallowed up by seven lean ears.**



**None of the king's wise men, magicians or servants  
were able to interpret the dreams.**

**PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41:1-8;**

**Two years had passed since Joseph had interpreted the dreams of the royal cupbearer and the royal baker.**

**One had been restored to his position while the other had been executed.  
Joseph languished in prison.**

## **PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41:1-8;**

**Pharaoh's dreams** were given in **the setting of Egypt.**  
The centre and lifeblood of Egypt was the Nile River,  
so **these groups of cows**  
**are seen coming up from the Nile.**

The second dream has as its focus  
the grain of Egypt and the east wind.

The wind that comes from the east  
**comes across the desert of the Sinai Peninsula.**  
It is a dry wind.

It would be this **same wind** that would bring  
**the plague of locusts,** (Exodus 10:13;)  
and would be responsible for **parting the Red Sea.**  
(Exodus 14:21;)

# PHARAOH'S PERPLEXING DREAMS. Gen 41:1-8;

The dream was understandably troubling and unusual because **cows do not eat cows and ears of grain do not consume other ears.**

What made the dream even more troubling is that those that were thin and scrawny and scorched **were not benefited** by the consumption of that which was good and fat and healthy.

First Dream	Second Dream
Seven fat cows come up from the Nile.	Seven good ears of grain grow on a stalk.
Seven skinny cows come up and eat the seven fat cows.	Seven thin, scorched ears of grain grow up and eat the good ears.
The seven skinny cows remained skinny even though they had eaten well.	The seven thin, scorched ears remained scorched and thin even though they had eaten well.

## **THE CUPBEARER'S REMINISCENT REPORT. Gen 41:9-13;**

**“Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, I would make mention today of my own offences.”**

**“Pharaoh was furious with his servants, and he put me in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, both me and the chief baker.”**

**“We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream.”**

**“Now a Hebrew youth was with us there, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we related them to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us.”**

## **THE CUPBEARER'S REMINISCENT REPORT. Gen 41:9-13;**

**“To each one he interpreted according to his own dream. It came about that just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him.”**

**The fact that the cupbearer mentions this now shows a certain amount of daring on his behalf, for he is bringing to the Pharaoh a reminder of his own offences.**

**He is risking a return of the wrath of the Pharaoh.**

## **JOSEPH'S ROYAL SUMMONS.** Gen 41:14;

**“Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh.”**

**Joseph is summoned** before the Pharaoh, but before he makes his appearance, he must be adequately prepared. **A shave is in order.**

This is notable since the Hebrews did not customarily shave but instead were **known by their long beards a sign of their manhood.**

The Egyptians, by contrast, normally kept all of their hair shaved as a matter of bodily cleanliness.

**They viewed a beard as something unkempt and unclean.**

## **JOSEPH'S ROYAL SUMMONS. Gen 41:14;**

**This suggests something about Joseph.**

**He had to learn to adapt to the culture  
in which he was living.**

**He had to learn to speak the language,  
to even get an audience He had to learn to groom  
himself after the fashion of the Egyptians.**

**This is a lesson that we need to learn if we are  
to reach out to the people of our own culture.**

**We need to learn to speak the language  
of a changing culture and to translate  
the message of the gospel into that language.**

**JOSEPH'S ROYAL SUMMONS. Gen 41:14;**

**Jesus is our pattern.** He became flesh and lived in the culture of the world of his day, speaking its language and living amongst its people and making them His own.

**He calls us to do the same.**

**We need to speak about God and Christ in a way that people understand and live lives that enable people to see Christ living in us.**

**We cannot be so heavenly minded as to become no earthly use.  
Ours needs to be a practical Christianity**

# Joseph Before Pharaoh.



## **JOSEPH'S HUMBLE ADMISSION. Gen 41:15-16;**

**“Pharaoh said to Joseph,  
I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it;  
and I have heard it said about you, that  
when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”**

**“Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not  
in me; God will give Pharaoh a favourable answer.”**

**Joseph does not say anything about  
his desire to be released from prison.**

**Nor does he use the opportunity to tell  
of what a wise man or what a capable dream  
interpreter he is. Instead,  
he gives the glory and the credit to the Lord.**

## **PHARAOH'S RE-TELLING OF THE DREAMS. Gen 41:17-24;**

**Pharaoh relates the details of the dream to Joseph.**

In doing so, he adds some details that we did not see in the initial description.

The first time he said that the second set of cows were ugly and gaunt. This time, he refers to them as poor and very ugly and gaunt and adds he had **never seen such ugliness** in all the land of Egypt.

He tells us that the skinny cows showed no sign of having become any fatter, even though they had eaten more than their own body weight.

**The point is that the lean years will be so bad that it will not be apparent that seven good years have come and gone.**

**JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION. Gen 41:25-32;**

**“Now Joseph said to Pharaoh,  
Pharaoh's dreams are one and the same;  
God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do.”**

**“The seven good cows are seven years;  
and the seven good ears are seven years;  
the dreams are one and the same.”**

**“And the seven lean and ugly cows that  
came up after them are seven years,  
and the seven thin ears scorched by the east wind  
shall be seven years of famine.”**

**“It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh:  
God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do.”**

**JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION. Gen 41:25-32;**

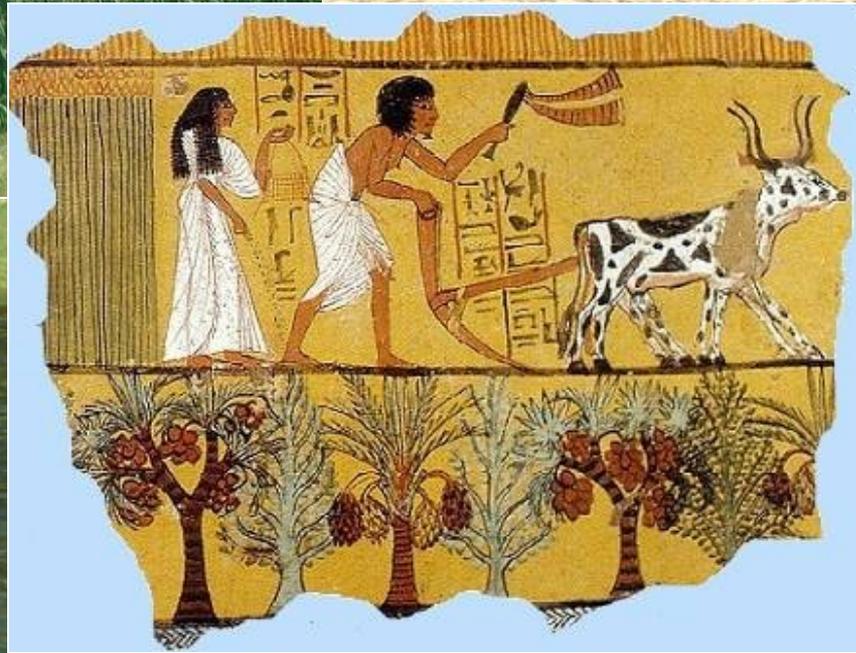
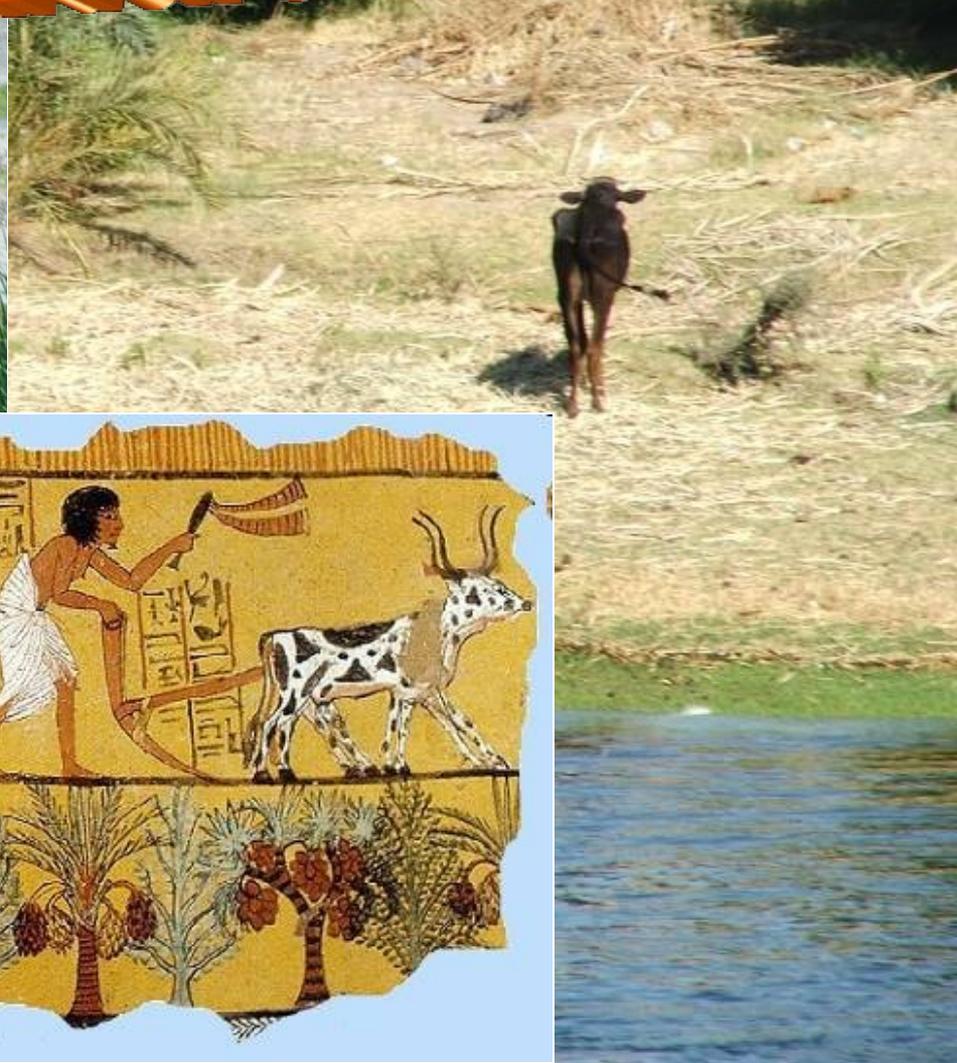
**“Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt; and after them seven years of famine will come,”**

**“all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will ravage the land.”**

**“So the abundance will be forgotten in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it will be very severe.”**

**“Now as for the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, it means that the matter is determined by God, and God will quickly bring it about.”**

# Pharaoh's Dreams



## JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION. Gen 41:25-32;

The two dreams both refer to the same future event.  
They are **prophetic** of what is going to take place.

First Dream	Second Dream	Interpretation
Seven fat cows.	Seven good ears of grain.	There will be seven years of agricultural Prosperity.
Seven skinny cows.	Seven thin, scorched ears of grain.	There will be seven years of famine.

This was an important part of the interpretation since **some prophecies are by their very nature conditional.**

**JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION. Gen 41:25-32;**

**Jonah came to Nineveh and announced that the city was to be destroyed within 40 days, but it is understood this was a conditional prophecy.**

**The unspoken condition was that this destruction would take place if there was no change in the hearts of the people.**

**This prophecy to Egypt is not given with conditions. The good years and the famine years were not going to come because of some certain sin on the part of the Egyptians.**

**Rather God was going to use this natural disaster as a means of bringing glory to God as He moved to bring salvation to the world.**

**JOSEPH'S WISE ADVICE. Gen 41:33-36;**

**“Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.”**

**“Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers in charge of the land, and let him exact a fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance.”**

**“Then let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and store up the grain for food in the cities under Pharaoh's authority, and let them guard it.”**

**“let the food become as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish during the famine.”**

## **JOSEPH'S WISE ADVICE. Gen 41:33-36;**

**Joseph not only had an interpretation for the dreams; he also had a ready plan to deal with the situation promised by the dreams.**

**It involved the establishment of a 20% tax on all of the produce of the land.**

**This double tithe was to be stored up for the coming years of famine.**

**The harvest during these years would be so prosperous that this tax would be virtually unnoticed.**

## **JOSEPH'S WISE ADVICE. Gen 41:33-36;**

**The king was so impressed that he placed Joseph in charge of gathering grain for the coming famine.**

**Joseph was exalted to be the ruler of all Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself.**

**There is no indication that Joseph had even hinted that he be the proposed administrator.**

**He did not “toss his hat into the ring” of qualified candidates who would be considered for the position. Instead, it was the Pharaoh who proposed him for the job.**

**Pharaoh placed Joseph in charge of gathering grain for the coming famine.**



## **JOSEPH'S WISE ADVICE. Gen 41:33-36;**

In recent years **great underground bins** have been discovered in Egypt resembling huge cisterns, with hundreds of tons capacity. **Scholars believe that these bins are the ruins of ancient granaries.**

**“Let another praise you, and not your own mouth;  
A stranger, and not your own lips.” (Proverbs 27:2;)**

**The world says, “Toot your own horn  
because no one else is going to toot it for you.”**

**The Lord says, “Humble yourselves, therefore,  
under the mighty hand of God,  
that He may exalt you at the proper time”  
(1 Peter 5:6;)**

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**Genesis**  
**39:1; to 41:36;**  
**Joseph in Egypt.**

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**Next in the series:-**

**Genesis 41:37; to 43:1; Joseph Rises to Power.**