

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

Lesson 3 – Genesis 41

Genesis 41 begins two full years after the chief butler was restored to his position; two full years after he had promised to remember Joseph to Pharaoh. For two full years the chief butler had forgotten Joseph, but God had not forgotten! In this chapter we will see the amazing change in Joseph's circumstances in just one day, a change God had planned and timed perfectly. As you study this chapter, be encouraged that God does have a plan and He has not forgotten you!

Begin your study with prayer...

Memory Verse – This week's memory verse is Psalm 62:5.

“My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation is from Him.”

Read Genesis 41:1-7.

1. *Two full years* had passed.

a. How might Joseph have felt during that time as he remained in prison waiting for the chief butler to tell the Pharaoh about him?

b. What are some things God could have been working on during that time?

2. What do you learn from the following verses that could be helpful during times of waiting or disappointment?

a. Psalm 27:14

b. Psalm 62:5-6

c. Isaiah 40:31

3. We have all had times of waiting in trials, when we do not know the Lord's plan or see the end in sight. What are some verses that have helped you during these times?

4. *Pharaoh had a dream...* We read of Pharaoh's dreams in Genesis 41:1-7 and the two dreams were similar.

- a. What do you notice about the appearance of the first seven cows and the first seven heads of grain?
- b. What is similar about the appearance of the second seven cows and heads of grain?
- c. What did the second set of cows and heads of grain do?

Read Genesis 41:8-16

1. From Genesis 41:8, what was Pharaoh's emotional reaction to these dreams?

- a. Who did the Pharaoh call to find relief or a solution to make him feel better?
- b. Pharaoh, in essence, sought relief in worldly wisdom. What are some sources people go to for relief or for wisdom in our world today?
- c. As you consider the best place to find relief or peace when you are troubled, thoughtfully record the words of Psalm 61:2.
- d. Reading on in Psalm 61, how might this help you find peace?

2. The wisdom of the world has no real help to offer. What do the following scriptures tell us about the wisdom of God?

- a. Proverbs 9:10
- b. James 1:5
- c. James 3:17

3. After the magicians and wise men of Egypt were unable to interpret the dreams, the chief butler remembered Joseph.

a. According to Genesis 41:12-13, what did he tell Pharaoh about Joseph?

b. What did Pharaoh do next, in verse 14?

4. Pharaoh made a statement in Genesis 41:15 that Joseph corrected in verse 16.

a. What was Joseph's correction?

b. What did Joseph say God would give Pharaoh?

c. What does John 14:27 say about this?

Read Genesis 41:17-32.

Pharaoh retold the two dreams to Joseph as he had in Genesis 41:1-7 and 17-24.

1. What did Joseph say about the dreams in verse 25?

2. As Joseph shared God's interpretation, what did the seven good cows and the seven good heads of grain represent?

3. What did the seven thin and ugly cows and the seven empty heads of grain represent?

4. Using Genesis 41:28-31, explain the Pharaoh's dreams.

5. According to Genesis 41:32, why was the dream repeated twice?

a. Look back at Genesis 37:7,9. What do you notice about Joseph's dreams?

b. Define or use synonyms to describe the meaning of the word *established*.

Read Genesis 41:33-46.

1. Genesis 41:33-36 is a continuation of the word the Lord gave Joseph for Pharaoh.
 - a. From Genesis 41:33, describe the man God told Pharaoh should choose and the position he would hold.

 - b. What was the plan God set out in Genesis 41:34-35?

 - c. How would this help according to verse 36?

2. In Genesis 41:37-38 Pharaoh added one more thing to the requirements for this leader: *“a man in whom is the Spirit of God”*. What characteristics would you find in this kind of man?

3. In Genesis 41:39-40 we see that Pharaoh chose Joseph to be this leader.
 - a. From verse 39, why did he choose Joseph?

 - b. What were Joseph’s responsibilities and privileges from verses 40-41 and 44?

4. Pharaoh did three specific things to demonstrate to all the position in which he had placed Joseph. Write these from the appropriate verses below.
 - a. Genesis 41:42 (first half)

 - b. Genesis 41:42 (second half)

 - c. Genesis 41:43

5. It is amazing to see the position Joseph now holds when he was in the prison that morning! But it didn’t really come so quickly.

- a. In Genesis 41:46, how old does it tell us Joseph was when he stood before Pharaoh?
- b. How old was Joseph when we first read of him in Genesis 37:2?
- c. So, approximately how long was Joseph a slave and a prisoner before he was lifted up to this position?
- d. What are your thoughts on this?

Read Genesis 41:47-57.

1. From Genesis 41:47-49, what did Joseph do during the seven years of plenty?
2. Joseph had two sons before the famine came.
 - a. In Genesis 41:51-52, what do the names he chose for each mean?
 1. Manasseh
 2. Ephraim
 - b. What does that tell you about Joseph at this time?
3. Genesis 41:54-57 describes the seven years of famine.
 - a. Where was the famine?
 - b. Because of God's warning and Joseph carrying out God's plan, what do these verses tell us of the provision during the famine?

In closing...

1. Realizing how long Joseph waited to see God's purpose and plan for him to come to fruition, and seeing that he served and kept a good attitude in those years, we see his faith in the waiting. Each of us would like to face waiting times in our trials in the same way. What do the following scriptures say that would encourage us in doing just that, and why?

a. Jeremiah 29:11

b. Isaiah 64:4

c. Ephesians 2:10

2. In Genesis 41:16 Joseph refused to take credit for the interpretation of the dreams, but instead gave God the glory when he said, *"It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."*

a. What does it mean to give God the glory?

b. What are some ways you can do that?

Memory Verse

*"My soul, wait silently for God alone,
For my expectation is from Him."
Psalm 62:5*