



**Genesis – 41:37-57**  
**From the Pit, to Potiphar’s House,**  
**to the Prison, to the Palace, to the Place of Preeminence!**  
**(Part #2) (Lesson #51)**

*To access missed lessons, lesson guides, and additional materials please visit our class website:*  
<https://truth-seekers.net>

**Joseph’s Timeline**

Event	Joseph’s Age	Genesis
<b>Joseph’s father moves family from Haran</b>	<b>6</b>	31:17-21
<b>Joseph is sold into slavery</b>	<b>17 /</b> <a href="#">Jac 108</a>	37:12-36
<b>Joseph interprets the dreams of cupbearer and baker while in prison</b>	<b>28</b>	41:1
<b>Joseph’s grandfather Isaac dies</b>	<b>29 /</b> <a href="#">Jac 120</a>	35:28-29
<b>Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams and is released from prison</b>	<b>30</b>	41:46
<b>Seven years of plenty, Manasseh and Ephraim born during this time</b>	<b>30-37</b>	41:47-52
<b>Seven years of famine</b>	<b>37-44</b>	41:47-52
<b>Joseph and Jacob reunite (2 years into famine), and family moves family to Egypt</b>	<b>39 /</b> <a href="#">Jac 130</a>	45:6, 47:9, 28
<b>Jacob dies</b>	<b>56 /</b> <a href="#">Jac 147</a>	47:28
<b>Joseph dies</b>	<b>110</b>	50:22-26

**Outline for this week:**

- I.** Pharaoh has two dreams (41:1-8)
- II.** The Chief Cupbearer remembers his fault (41:9-13)
- III.** Pharaoh sends for Joseph (41:14)
- IV.** Pharaoh shares both dreams with Joseph (41:15-24)
- V.** Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams (41:25-32)
- VI.** Joseph then tells Pharaoh what he should do (41:33-36)
- VII.** Pharaoh elevates Joseph to second in command in Egypt (41:34-44)
- VIII.** Pharaoh gives Joseph a wife (41:45)
- IX.** Joseph sets out to gather the food during the times of great plenty (41:46-49)
- X.** God gives Joseph two sons by his wife Asenath (41:50-52)
- XI.** The famine begins and all Egypt as well as the surrounding nations go to Joseph for grain (41:53-57)

**37** *This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. 38* *And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" 39* *Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. 40* *You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you."*

**Vs 37-38** - Get this picture in your mind, the most powerful man in Egypt is seated on his throne, standing before him is a **30 year old Hebrew** (who one minute ago was a slave in Pharaoh’s prison).

Pharaoh **listened** and **this made sense**, this seemed like a **wise plan**, this seemed like a **reasonable way** to proceed.

Notice this plan also **pleased Pharaoh's servants**. These were likely advisors who served in Pharaoh's court. These **were various executive level cabinet staff**, and this plan pleased them as well!

You can almost picture them looking at one another shaking their heads, yes, this make sense, this is a good plan.

Then in the back half of verse 38, **Pharaoh poses a rhetorical question** to his court: *Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?"*

Pharaoh is a pagan, a **worshipper of false gods**, he is a polytheist, but he has run into a guy who can **interpret dreams** and his chief cupbearers has borne witness that when Joseph interpreted their dreams, he proved to be spot on in the timing and in the fulfillment.

He concludes there is nowhere else where we will be able to find one in whom is the **"Spirit of God."**

**Now it is unlikely that Pharaoh believes in Yahweh or Yahweh's Spirit, but he is filtering what he sees based on his own pagan beliefs.**

We saw something very similar happen with Daniel:

*"This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. And you, O Belteshazzar, tell me the interpretation, because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation, but you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you."* (Da 4:18 ESV)

**Pharaoh** and many years later **Nebuchadnezzar** are both **viewing their situation** through their own **pagan lens**.

**APPLICATION:** Do believers and unbelievers see God, the true and living God at work in our lives, even if the unbelievers do not fully understand what they are seeing?

**Vs 39-40** - The Pharaoh shifts from **interacting with his court** and **speaks directly** to Joseph.

**Notice first, the appointment:**

- 1) I put you over **my house**. The most powerful man in Egypt places this 30 year of Hebrew man, 1 minute ago a slave, in charge of his entire house!
- 2) All **my people** will **order themselves under you**, they will obey your commands! I put everyone in my kingdom. This would include the **head prison keeper** and **the captain of the guard** (AKA Potiphar).
- 3) Only in **regards to the throne**. You are in charge, only as it regards the throne will I be greater than you.

**APPLICATION:** Have I ever told you that God can change things in a second? One minute ago Joseph was ushered from the **prison** to the **palace**, and now he is elevated to the **place of preeminence**.

**Notice secondly, why** (according to Pharaoh) he **has appointed Joseph:**

- 1) This pagan believes what Joseph has told him, is **all of God**. Since his God has shown him this, since his God shows him things, it brings us to the second reason Pharaoh is elevating Joseph.
- 2) There is none so **discerning as you!** This Hebrew word is the exact same word that Joseph used when he described the man the Pharaoh should look for. It means to **discern**, to **perceive**, to **understand**.

**Reminder, discernment is a gift of the Spirit:**

*"8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. 12 ¶ For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." (1Co 12:8-12 ESV)*

- 3) There is none as **wise as you**. Here again, Pharaoh takes **Joseph's description** and says, none are as wise as you, **because you have the spirit of the God at work in your life and God** has showed you all this!

When the deacons were selected in the book of Acts:

*"Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty." (Ac 6:3 ESV)*

Joseph has been **prepared** for this role through trials and tribulations and various lesser positions. We saw a **hint of this** when **Potiphar exalted Joseph** to the highest position in his house, **another hint** when the **jailer exalted Joseph to the highest position in the jail**.

But here, **Pharaoh** exalts Joseph to the **highest place in the land**, only behind the **Pharaoh in the throne!**

**PICTURE OF JESUS:** As you consider all of this, I cannot help but be **reminded of Jesus:**

*"3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Php 2:3-11 ESV)*

**As you are considering this: Joseph was betrayed by his brothers**, but ultimately elevated to a place where all men submit to him. **Jesus was betrayed by his brothers** (Israel) but ultimately **elevated to the place where all men will answer to him!**

*41 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." 42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. 43 And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. 44 Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."*

**Vs 41** - I can see in my mind's eye, there from the throne room, the Pharaoh spun around and said **see**, I have elevated you as the **second most powerful man in Egypt**. I have set you over the **entire kingdom!**

By the way, Moses records this **five times in Genesis:** (Ge 41:41, 41:43, 41:44, 45:8, 45:26).

*"And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." (Ge 41:41 ESV)*

*"And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt." (Ge 41:43 ESV)*

*“Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.”” (Ge 41:44 ESV)*

*“So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.” (Ge 45:8 ESV)*

*“And they told him, “Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” And his heart became numb, for he did not believe them.” (Ge 45:26 ESV)*

**Vs 42** - Here we see the **formal investiture** of Joseph into the office of **Vizier over Egypt** or of **Prime Minister of Egypt!**

The Pharaoh took his signet ring off and gave it to Joseph. He would now execute all actions with Pharaoh’s authority.

**REMEMBER:** Judah gave his signet away from a **pledge for one night of sin**. Joseph received Pharaoh’s signet because of his faithfulness to Yahweh!

Can you think of **two brothers**, with **two stories** that are more different?

The signet ring was a unique **symbol of authority**, and it allowed Joseph to **seal official decrees** with **Pharaoh’s name and title**. It gave Joseph the authority to **give commands in Pharaoh’s name!**

He put new garments on Joseph, so much for the freshly changed, howbeit prison garments, and Pharaoh put a gold necklace on his neck.

Can I say it... **From the Pit, to Potiphar’s House, to Prison, to the Palace, to the place of preeminence!**

**Pharaoh: clothed Joseph with garments of fine linen!**

**APPLICATION:** This reminds us of what God has done for us when we placed faith in Christ, he has clothed us with the righteousness of Christ, and prepared us to stand in His presence!

Our works (clothing) will not suffice when we stand before Christ. **If you are a believer, when God looks at you he sees the perfection of His son!**

Next we see that Pharaoh places the gold necklace around Joseph’s neck. We see this exact same thing later in Biblical history with the captive Daniel:

*“The king called loudly to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers. The king declared to the wise men of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”” (Da 5:7 ESV)*

Pharaoh decks this Hebrew slave out, as **the Prime Minister** or the **Vizier of Egypt!**

**Vs 43** - Then Pharaoh placed Joseph in the **second chariot**, likely following behind Pharaoh’s chariot, and likely his chariot was nearly as ornate as Pharaoh’s chariot.

As the chariots traveled through the streets, heralds were sent out in advance calling to the people **“bow the knee”** to the new overseer of Egypt, **“bow the knee”** to the new sovereign of the land. **Bow the knee!**

Thus, Pharaoh, set Joseph over all the land of Egypt.

In Joseph's dreams he saw his brothers and even his dad and step-mom bow to him. That has not happened yet, **but the whole nation of Egypt has!**

**Remember the PICTURE OF JESUS** (Php 2:5-11).

**APPLICATION:** As Pharaoh servants ran before Joseph's chariot, with a single message, "bow the knee", today, as God's servants, we have the same message but to the one who Joseph pointed to. **Bow the knee to King Jesus, repent of your sins, turn to Jesus by faith!**

**Vs 44** - Moreover, Pharaoh said, without your consent, no one shall lift a hand or a foot in the land of Egypt.

This is an **idiomatic expression** which means that Joseph has **full authority**, Joseph is the **sovereign** (second only to Pharaoh) **over the land!**

I want to quote Henry Morris at this point, for his summation is as tight and as good as it gets: "

*This was a truly amazing development. An unknown alien prisoner suddenly elevated over the entire land of Egypt! The necessity for Joseph's long period of suffering and humiliation, learning patience and trust, is now clearly seen. Another man so suddenly exalted would almost certainly have quickly been filled with heavy pride and would sooner or later have been ruined by success. Joseph as properly tempered and mellowed, however. He knew that God had prepared him and that He would continue to strengthen and guide him."*

**Vs 45** *And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.*

Here we see Joseph settle into his new role. We see he is given a new name and he is given a new wife. The Pharaoh renamed Joseph to **Zaphenath-paneah**. I believe that Pharaoh is likely bestowing on Joseph full **Egyptian citizenship** and its **associated social status**.

He is given an **Egyptian name**, an **Egyptian wife**, and **appointed as the Egyptian Sovereign**.

There is a **lot of disagreement** on what this **Egyptian name means**, let me give you some of the thoughts:

*"The God speaks and he lives"  
"God has spoken and he shall live"  
"God's word speaking life"  
"Abundance of life"  
"Savior of the world"  
"Revealer of secrets"*

These **words all point** to a **single idea**. Pharaoh likely gave Joseph a name, that was **above all names**, and pointed to his **unique and unparalleled contribution to the nation of Egypt**.

He would indeed be the **Savior of Israel**, but more than that, God's words, when explained by Joseph **brought life from death for Pharaoh and the nation of Egypt!**

**WHAT A PICTURE OF THE LORD JESUS!**

Next Pharaoh gave in marriage the daughter of **Potiphara**, the Priest of On's daughter, Asenath. Asenath is a pagan, and her name means **"belonging to the goddess Neith."**

This woman is mentioned only one other time in the Bible:

*"And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara the priest of On, bore to him." (Ge 46:20 ESV)*

Now three things about Joseph's pagan bride:

- 1) It appears that Pharaoh set up this marriage, so Joseph, we might conclude, was forced into it.
    - a. We should not use this as a proof text that it is ok to marry someone who is not a Christian, we should instead follow Paul (II Cor 6:14) (unequally yoked).
  - 2) It is interesting, that as we see consider Joseph was a picture of Jesus, both that he had a Gentile bride!
  - 3) As best we can tell there was never another woman in Joseph's life, just Asenath!
- 
- 
- 

*46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. 47 During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, 48 and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. 49 And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.*

**Vs 46** - Joseph was **30 years old** when he entered the service of Pharaoh, the King of Egypt. **Thirteen years** had passed since he had been sold into slavery.

Joseph begins to execute his new duties. He begins to go throughout all the land **executing God's plan to save the nation from the famine that is coming in 7 short years.**

This man who started out shepherding his father's flock, then running Potiphar's house, then running the prison, is **now running Egypt.**

All that has happened to him in the past has prepared him to serve well in this **place of preeminence.** Joseph has been given real authority and he is exercising that authority.

**APPLICATION:** Your **trials and troubles** of today may be **preparing you** for the **place of service God has for you** to serve in **tomorrow.** In fact, that place could be **shockingly different** than the **place of preparation.**

**Vs 47-48** - During the **seven years of plenty** the earth **produced abundantly.** As God had said that it would!

I would remind us what Joseph told Pharaoh:

*"25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. 27 The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine." (Ge 41:25-27 ESV)*

It seems that within (at least each major city) Joseph starting storing food for the coming famine as **he essentially taxed the Egyptians 20%** of what they produced.

**Vs 49** - Joseph stored grain in **great abundance.** He stored grain so much so that it became like the sand of the sea. When we see the words "like or as" we recognize that we are looking at a simile.

We recognize that this is figurative language, **this is hyperbole.** But, Joseph, stored so much grain that he **ceased to measure it,** he stored so much grain **that it could not be measured.**

Joseph did **exactly what he told Pharaoh should be done**. Joseph prepared Egypt for the famine that he was certain was coming!

---

---

---

*50 Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On, bore them to him. 51 Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." 52 The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."*

**Vs 50** - So, before the famine commenced, during the seven years of plenty, God blessed Joseph with two children born of Asenath.

**Vs 51** - Joseph called the name of the **firstborn Manasseh**, for Joseph said: *"God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house."*

The name Manasseh literally means: **"causing to forget."** Life had been hard, in his father's house, his brothers had mistreated him, his brothers had mocked and ridiculed him.

Joseph names his firstborn son Manasseh, saying **this boy has made me forget all of that**. Not forget, in the sense of **not remembering** his dad and family but forget in the **sense of his wounds are healed**, he has **forgiven them for what they have done wrong to him**.

I can hear Joseph saying something like - **I don't even think about that anymore**. It seems all the **negative emotions** that could have filled his memories in reference to his brothers, have been replaced.

He sees the truth of Romans 8:28, thousands of years before Paul pens it:

*"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." (Ro 8:28 ESV)*

When he finally confronts his brothers, here is what he will say about what they did:

*"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today." (Ge 50:20 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** Joseph learned that **his hardships** had a much **bigger goal** than he could have ever imagined. I wonder if this is often the **case for you and I?**

**APPLICATION:** But there is another point of application, I need to be sure to make. Joseph forgave his brothers, he forgave Potiphar, and he forgave Potiphar's wife.

Joseph was not holding any grudges; Joseph was not looking for an opportunity to "get even." How about us, have we forgiven those who have wronged us, or are we holding secret grudges?

Hear the words of Jesus:

*"14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Mt 6:14-15 ESV)*

**Vs 52** - He named the second son **Ephraim**, the name means **"double fruit."**

He named his second son Ephraim because God had **made him fruitful**, and indeed **two sons to a man who just a few years ago was in prison** is fruitful, **but notice it is God who did this**.

God has made Joseph fruitful in the **land of Joseph's affliction**, in the **land of his trouble**, in the **land of his misery**. You see Joseph's body was in Egypt, but his **heart was longing for Canaan**.

Joseph had riches, **but riches did not have Joseph**. Joseph was in Egypt, but Egypt had been unable to get inside Joseph. At the end of the day, Egypt was the land of Joseph's affliction.

Before we move on it is important to note that Joseph was the most powerful man in Egypt (behind Pharaoh) **but he gave his two sons Hebrew names**.

You see when we read the story of Joseph, we can think money is the payoff, power is the payoff, wine women and songs are the payoff. They were not with Joseph, and the truth is they are not for us either.

The **payoff is walking with God**, the **payoff is being used by God**, the **payoff is knowing God and being known by God**.

**Joseph got it**, I worry we sometimes we get confused.

---

---

---

*53 The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end, 54 and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. 55 When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do."*

**Vs 53-54** - The **seven years of plenty ended** as Joseph had said they would. The seven years of famine commenced, there was a famine throughout all the lands!

So this famine was not localized to just Egypt, and we do not know exactly how far it spread, we recognize that it **swept over the land, even Canaan**, but Egypt had bread.

**Vs 55** - The people of **Egypt were famished**, they were **hungry**, they were **starving!** The people of Egypt cried out to Pharaoh and Pharaoh said: *"Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do."*

*56 So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. 57 Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.*

**Vs 56** - As the **famine spread all over the land, and beyond**, Joseph opened up all of the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. The famine was severe, food production due to the **famine was minimal (at best)** and Joseph opened up the storehouses and began selling the grain back to the Egyptians.

**Vs 57** - But it was not just Egypt that came to Joseph to buy food.

As word spread that bread was available in Egypt, people came from the **known world** to **purchase food from the man**, who **God had elevated** and put in a position to protect, nurture, and grow the nation of Israel whom the Messiah would descend from!

---

---