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## Wisdom from God Genesis 40-41 Pastor Kirk Gambrell

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### Using This Study

#### ❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

#### ❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

#### ❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



### Hebrews 11:6

**But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."**

In Chapters 40 and 41 of Genesis Joseph starts off in prison. There Joseph is able to interpret dreams for some other prisoners. The interpretations turn out to be accurate and one of the prisoners is released back to his service of Pharaoh as the cupbearer. Later Pharaoh has a dream that troubles him and he is looking for someone who knows what it means. The cupbearer tells Pharaoh about Joseph and his ability to interpret dreams. Joseph is brought in to interpret the dream for Pharaoh and is quickly promoted in the kingdom. Joseph has faced many trials but each step along the way we see his continued faith and trust in the one true God. God blesses his faithfulness in the face of trials. Join us this week as we talk about our faith in the midst of trials and the blessings that God has instore for us.

## Joseph Interprets a Dream

**40** Then it came about after these things, the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> Pharaoh was furious with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> When Joseph came to them in the morning and observed them, behold, they were dejected. <sup>7</sup> He asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in confinement in his master's house, "Why are your faces so sad today?" <sup>8</sup> 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."

<sup>9</sup> 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; <sup>10</sup> and on the vine *were* three branches. And as it was budding, its blossoms came out, *and* its clusters produced ripe grapes. <sup>11</sup> 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." <sup>12</sup> Then Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it: the three branches are three days; <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> Only keep me in mind when it goes well with you, and please do me a kindness by mentioning me to Pharaoh and get me out of this house. <sup>15</sup> For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon."

<sup>16</sup> When the chief baker saw that he had interpreted favorably, he said to Joseph, "I also *saw* in my dream, and behold, *there were* three baskets of white bread on my head; <sup>17</sup> and 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." <sup>18</sup> Then Joseph answered and said, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; <sup>19</sup> 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."

<sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand; <sup>22</sup> but he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. <sup>23</sup> Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

## Pharaoh's Dream

**41** Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile. <sup>2</sup> And lo, from the Nile there came up seven cows, sleek and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> The ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke. <sup>5</sup> He fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good. <sup>6</sup> Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them. <sup>7</sup> The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, *it was* a dream. <sup>8</sup> Now in the morning 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.

<sup>9</sup> Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, “I would make mention today of my *own* offenses. <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his *own* dream. <sup>12</sup> 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. To each one he interpreted according to his *own* dream. <sup>13</sup> And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him.”

## Joseph Interprets

<sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> 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.” <sup>16</sup> Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.” <sup>17</sup> So Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, “In my dream, behold, I was standing on the bank of the Nile; <sup>18</sup> and behold, seven cows, fat and sleek came up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the marsh grass. <sup>19</sup> Lo, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such as I had never seen for ugliness in all the land of Egypt; <sup>20</sup> and the lean and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows. <sup>21</sup> Yet when they had devoured them, it could not be detected that they had devoured them, for they were just as ugly as before. Then I awoke. <sup>22</sup> I saw also in my dream, and behold, seven ears, full and good, came up on a single stalk; <sup>23</sup> and lo, seven ears, withered, thin, *and* scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them; <sup>24</sup> and the thin ears swallowed the seven good ears. Then I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me.”

<sup>25</sup> Now Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one *and the same*; God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do. <sup>26</sup> The seven good cows are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one *and the same*. <sup>27</sup> The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven thin ears scorched by the east wind will be seven years of famine. <sup>28</sup> It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do. <sup>29</sup> Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt; <sup>30</sup> and after them seven years of famine will come, and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will ravage the land. <sup>31</sup> So the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it *will be* very severe. <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. <sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> 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*. <sup>36</sup> 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 will not perish during the famine."

<sup>37</sup> Now the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants.

<sup>38</sup> Then Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?" <sup>39</sup> So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are. <sup>40</sup> You shall be over my house, and according to your command all my people shall do homage; only in the throne I will be greater than you." <sup>41</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." <sup>42</sup> Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put the gold necklace around his neck. <sup>43</sup> He had him ride in his second chariot; and they proclaimed before him, "Bow the knee!" And he set him over all the land of Egypt. <sup>44</sup> Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Though I am Pharaoh, yet without your permission no one shall raise his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." <sup>45</sup> Then Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as his wife. And Joseph went forth over the land of Egypt.

<sup>46</sup> Now Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. <sup>47</sup> During the seven years of plenty the land brought forth abundantly. <sup>48</sup> So he gathered all the food of *these* seven years which occurred in the land of Egypt and placed the food in the cities; he placed in every city the food from its own surrounding fields. <sup>49</sup> Thus Joseph stored up grain in great abundance like the sand of the sea, until he stopped measuring *it*, for it was beyond measure.

<sup>50</sup> Now before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore to him. <sup>51</sup> Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, "For," *he said*, "God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." <sup>52</sup> He named the second Ephraim, "For," *he said*, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

<sup>53</sup> When the seven years of plenty which had been in the land of Egypt came to an end, <sup>54</sup> and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said, then there was famine in all the 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 out to Pharaoh for bread; and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, you shall do." <sup>56</sup> When the famine was *spread* over all the face of the earth, then Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians; and the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. <sup>57</sup> *The people of* all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.

**o EXAMINE His Word (Observation)** (For personal preparation)

**What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passage.**

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?



**③ EMBRACE His Word (Application)** (For Community Group discussion)

Why does this MATTER to me?

14. Joseph seems to be blessed because of his continued faith in God. Is it safe to say we will be blessed by continued faith and trust in God?

15. Joseph's blessing does not come right away, it is only after many trials. What does this tell us about our own trials? Can we know how long the trials will be? Will there always be blessing at the end of them?

16. Does God still speak through dreams? Do all our dreams mean something? How can we tell which ones are from God?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to **KNOW**, to **FEEL**, and to **DO**...

*Sermon Notes*