

## Genesis Part II (Chapters 25-50)

### Lesson 8: Joseph's Brothers in Egypt

**Reading:** Genesis 42:1-44:34

In chapter 40, God continues to be with Joseph and causes everything he does to prosper, even in prison. As keeper of the prison, Joseph is charged with the care of the chief butler and chief baker, who have both offended Pharaoh. Each man has a dream but is unable to interpret it. Joseph interprets both dreams while giving credit to God. Both interpretations come true: in 3 days, the chief butler is restored to his former position as cupbearer to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh hangs the chief baker. In chapter 41, Pharaoh has two dreams. In the first dream, 7 lean, ugly cows eat 7 fat, healthy cows. In the second dream, 7 thin heads of grain eat 7 healthy heads of grain. When Pharaoh's magicians are unable to interpret the dreams, the chief butler remembers Joseph and tells Pharaoh of his ability. Joseph is brought before Pharaoh and states that God will give Pharaoh an "answer of peace". Joseph interprets the two dreams: there will be 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine so severe that the plenty will be forgotten. Joseph recommends Pharaoh appoint someone to oversee the effort to collect 20% of the harvest during the 7 years of plenty to prepare the land for the famine. Pharaoh agrees and selects Joseph, acknowledging that he possesses the wisdom of God. As a result, Joseph is appointed prime minister over Egypt and is made second-in-command to Pharaoh. He is given an Egyptian name and an Egyptian wife and has two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. When the 7 years of plenty ends and the famine comes, Joseph is put in charge of selling grain to the Egyptians and people from all other countries.

#### **Joseph's Brothers go to Egypt (42:1-24)**

1. Why does Jacob send only ten of his sons and keep Benjamin at home (42:4)?
2. How do Joseph's brothers defend themselves against Joseph's charge of them being spies (42:10-13)?
3. How do Joseph's brothers interpret his treatment of them, and what do they believe has happened to Joseph (42:21-22)?

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4. Why did you think Joseph chose Simeon to put in jail while his brothers returned to Canaan to bring back Benjamin (42:22-24)?

### **Joseph's brothers return to Canaan (42:25-38)**

#### **Joseph's brothers return to Egypt (43:1-34)**

5. What causes Jacob to relent and send Benjamin with his brothers upon their return to Egypt (43:8-14)?
  
6. What impact did Joseph seeing his brothers with Benjamin have on him (43:26-31)?
  
7. What was unusual about the brothers' meal with Joseph (43:32-34)?

#### **Joseph's brothers attempt to return to Canaan (44:1-17)**

8. What defense do Joseph's brothers make against the steward's accusation of stealing the silver cup, and what vow do they make (44:7-13)?

#### **Judah's plea for Benjamin's life (44:18-34)**

9. How does Judah plead for Benjamin's life and what lessons can be learned from his defense (44:18-34)?