

The Belonging: A Study in Genesis 37-50
Lesson 4 – Joseph is Remembered
Genesis 41

God's Best is Worth the Wait

I. Pharaoh's Dreams (Genesis 41:1-13)

A. The Cows

B. The Ears of Grain

The word *šibbōlet* (cf. *sibbōlet*, Judges 12:6) refers to the seed atop the stalks of grassy cereal plants; it is that part of the plant that is cut and gathered (e.g., Job 24:24; Isaiah 17:5). The "stalk" (*qāneh*, "reed") is the stem of the plant. That they were sprouting from a "single stalk" testified to their potency. Because of its abundance in the Nile valley (Isaiah 19:6), the "stalk" ("reed") is associated especially with Egypt (2 Kings 18:21//Isaiah 36:6; Ezekiel 29:6–7) (*The New American Commentary* by Kenneth Matthews).

C. Does God still speak through dreams?

The Bible –

- Abimelech – Genesis 20:6-7
- Laban – Genesis 31:24
- Jacob – Genesis 28:10-15; 31:10-13
- Joseph – Genesis 37:5-11
- The Baker and the Cupbearer – Genesis 40
- Pharaoh – Genesis 41
- Gideon overheard a dream from the enemy camp – Judges 7:13-14
- Solomon – 1 Kings 3:5
- Daniel – Daniel 7-10
- Nebuchadnezzar – Daniel 2 & 4
- New Testament – Joseph – Matthew 1:20-21; 2:13
- Pilate's wife – Matthew 27:19
- Paul's Macedonian vision – Acts 16

"When there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, reveal Myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams" (Numbers 12:6, NIV).

"It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions" (Joel 2:28).

"Here is a principle that is inviolable. Though God can speak to us through dreams, He speaks most clearly to us through Scripture, which is the Word of God. Any message we get through a dream or through any other mode of revelation will never contradict or

work against the Word of God as presented in Scripture” (*Genesis: The Story of God Bible Commentary Book 1* by Temper Longman III, p. 500).

Nabeel Qureshi – Pakistani-American who converted from Islam to Christianity. The author of *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus: A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity*, *Answering Jihad: A Better Way Forward*, and *No God But One – Allah or Jesus*. Nabeel came to Christ in college after having three different dreams. A Christian friend pointed him to Joseph of the Old Testament as well as Joseph in the New Testament – who both had dreams through which God spoke to them. After his third dream, he turned to Christ - He became an accomplished Christian apologist.

The Insanity of God by Nik Ripken. Nik (Ken Perkins) was an IMB missionary to Africa. After coming back to the states after the death of his son from an asthma attack, he began to study how the Lord was moving in nations that persecute Christians. In this book, he tells story after story of how God is taking the gospel to closed countries and persecuted people through extraordinary means. Many times those means include dreams.

Dreams in our day seem to be given primarily to those seeking God. And it is amazing how the Lord orchestrates believers’ lives to bring them across the path of seekers. Are you open and willing to be used by the Lord?

II. Joseph is Remembered (Genesis 41:14-36)

God’s timing is perfect. The Lord may appear to be slow but when He begins to move, things happen speedily.

III. Joseph is Exalted (Genesis 41:37-57)

God not only gave Joseph the interpretation of the dreams, but the wisdom to prepare for the coming famine. Potiphar was so moved by his insight and wisdom that he pronounced Joseph as the one to carry out the plan. He was given a new robe, a signet ring and a gold necklace. He was given a chariot in which to ride and before whom all must “Bow the knee!”

Jesus and Joseph

F. B Meyer said,

The two malefactors of the cross find their counterpart in Joseph’s fellow prisoners. Joseph, though a Hebrew by birth and rejected by his own brethren, nevertheless was raised to supreme power in a gentile state, and saved myriads of them from death; Jesus, of Jewish birth and yet disowned by Jews, has nevertheless been exalted to the supreme seat of power and is now enthroned in the hearts of myriads of Gentiles to whom he has brought salvation from death and spiritual bread for their hunger. The very name that Pharaoh gave to Joseph meant “Savior of the world” – our Savior’s title (F.B. Meyer as quoted in *Genesis*, Vol. 3, p. 973).

The people of Egypt and the surrounding areas were despairing. Despite the fact that they had been warned of the coming famine, they had not prepared.

“But despair is not necessary. Disaster is not predetermined. God’s man, the Lord Jesus Christ, has come. And just as the great king of Egypt told the starving, worried people of his day to go to Joseph, so does the true King of the universe command men and women everywhere today to ‘go to Jesus’” (James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis, Vol. 3*, p. 974-975).

Our God is sovereign. His plan will come to pass. Our job is to believe!

Nabeel Qureshi – Diagnosed with cancer and in the midst of treatment, He said, **“I will not forsake His Name!”**

Henrietta Mears – **“I will not fail Him!”**

If we decide as Joseph did that we will honor our God, we will be prepared when the trial or test comes – We will not fail Him!