

# On the Beginning

## 38. Joseph's Exaltation

NOTE ESPECIALLY Genesis 41

After two dark years of prison and deep disappointment, Joseph (who stayed faithful to God) finally saw the fulfillment of his boyhood dreams (See again Genesis 37:5-11). It is amazing how quickly the change came! God keeps His promises, although our faith in Him will often be sorely tried. We must keep on believing, and keep faithful until the fulfillment comes.

1. Pharaoh's **Dreams**.

In Genesis 41:1-7 we read two dreams the ruler of Egypt had which troubled him. When his servants heard of Pharaoh's concern that the meaning of his dreams be determined, the butler remembered Joseph (vs. 8-13). He told the King of this prisoner's power to interpret dreams, and opened the door for Joseph's deliverance. God has everything under control. Disappointing experiences do not prove God unfaithful. They are often just indicators of God's wise timing.

2. Joseph's **Answer**.

Verses 14-32 tell us about Joseph's release from prison and his interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams. The dreams gave Egypt a detailed prediction of a coming famine that would devastate that part of the world. This revelation would be the basis of deliverance both for Egypt and for the family of Jacob. Of course, Joseph could not have interpreted these dreams without the Lord's help. Part of what was going on was that Pharaoh had met a true man of God. Such a meeting brings tremendous results. This is why it is so important for every Christian to have God's blessing on his life. If our disobedience or unbelief robs us of His blessing, not only ourselves but many others miss out on wonderful things!

3. The Plan and The **Man**.

Joseph not only had the answer to Pharaoh's question about his dreams, he also had a solution to the problems the upcoming famine presented (vs. 33-36). The plan was dependent upon finding a "*wise and discreet*" man who could administer the program of saving goods for the time of want. Finding the right person to do the job is often the key to success.

Immediately Pharaoh concluded that Joseph himself was that man (See vs. 37-40). Joseph's head must have been spinning on this day. He woke up a prisoner and went to bed the second-in-command of the greatest nation in the world! How marvellous are the ways of God! Look at I Samuel 2:7-8. If a man stays faithful to God, there is no telling what the Lord may do for him. God can change the worst of circumstances overnight.

It had been about 13 years since he had been taken to Egypt as a slave (compare v. 46 with Genesis 37:2). Nearly all of that time had been spent in hard trials of his faith. But now Joseph's faith was rewarded (vs. 41-49).

4. Joseph's Two **Sons**.

After his exaltation, Joseph married and fathered two sons (vs. 50-57). Their names are very significant to his story.

- a. Manasseh means "forgetting." A man must move on, and forget the pain and sorrow of the past. By the time his first son was born, Joseph had dealt with the mistreatment his brothers had inflicted on him, and chose to "forget" it in a sense. There are people in our class who desperately need to let the pain of the past go. Joseph was enabled to do it by staying faithful to God through his trials.
- b. Ephraim means "fruitful." We really haven't forgotten the past until we have become fruitful and productive in the present. Joseph was fulfilling an obvious purpose in his life, and this was proof that he had overcome the pain of his childhood. With God's help, you can be fruitful today once you have "forgotten" yesterday!