Joseph's Slavery Ends

Genesis 41:1-57

Bible Memory Verse

Romans 8:28 NIV

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Bible Story

Joseph's life has been a wild roller coaster ride—up and down, up and down, loopy loop. Will things ever work out for the man the Lord has favor on?

Two full years pass since the cupbearer and the baker had their dreams come true. The cupbearer is still in his position of honor right next to Pharaoh. And one evening, Pharaoh has a dream:

> *"He was standing by the Nile, when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank. And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows" (Genesis 41:1-4).*

After that dream, Pharaoh woke up. Then he fell back asleep and had a second dream:

> *"Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted—thin and scorched by the east wind. The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads" (Genesis 41:5-7).*

After the second dream, Pharaoh woke up again. In the morning, he mind was troubled. And so he did what any Pharaoh would have done—he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his two dream, but none of the magicians or wise men could interpret the dreams.

Meanwhile, the cupbearer is watching all of this unfold, and then smacks his head in remembrance. Joseph! The dream-interpreter guy that helped me back in my prison days!! The cupbearer leans over to Pharaoh and says:

> *"Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was hanged" (Genesis 41:9-13).*

After the cupbearers trip down memory lane, Pharaoh sent for Joseph immediately. Joseph was cleaned up and prepared for a meeting with the king of Egypt.

Pharaoh told Joseph that he had two dreams and no one could interpret them, and he asked Joseph if he could. Joseph told him that he could not; however, God could. So Pharaoh told Joseph the two dreams he had the previous night. After Pharaoh's recount of the dreams Joseph told him the Lord's interpretation: Seven years of great abundance and then seven years of severe famine. The reason for the two dreams: God has firmly decided that this will happen soon. Joseph dispensed some advice to Pharaoh:

> *"And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food. This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine" (Genesis 41:33-36).*

Pharaoh was pleased with the advice of Joseph and thus placed him in charge of the task he suggested. And so Pharaoh made Joseph second-in-command of the land of Egypt. And Joseph put into action the plan that was devised to save the people of Egypt from starvation.

Joseph's enslavement was officially over. He was now in the place that God had prepared for him via the path that God had laid out for him.

Life Application

God really does work things out. He really does have a master plan. The story of Joseph's journey through slavery to his position beside Pharaoh, serves to remind us that God works for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

Perhaps what we need in the meantime (or along the journey) is hope and patience. Hope to know that there is light at the end of our tunnel. And patience to allow us to actually make it to that light. With God, all things are possible.

So endure.

Review Questions

1. How long was Joseph in prison after he had interpreted the two chief's dreams? Two full years.
2. Who had two dreams that needed interpreting? Pharaoh.
3. Who could NOT interpret Pharaoh's dreams? Magicians and wise men of Egypt.
4. Who COULD interpret Pharaoh's dreams? Joseph.
5. What did Joseph tell Pharaoh his dreams meant? That there was going to be seven years of plentiful harvest, and seven years of extreme famine. And the two dreams meant that it was firmly decided by God.
6. What advice did Joseph give to Pharaoh? To appoint an overseer to save food in anticipation of the severe famine.
7. Who did Pharaoh appoint to this position and why? Joseph! Because God had been preparing him his whole life for such a time as this!

Coloring Sheet

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