

Genesis 41 - Pharaoh's Two Dreams; Joseph Released from Prison, Interprets Dreams with Advice; Joseph Named Prime Minister of Egypt; 7 Years of Abundance/Famine

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Genesis 41

(b) Joseph's faithfulness in prison (Gen 39:19—41:36)

(ii) Interpreting dreams (40:1—41:36)

(b) Pharaoh's dreams (41:1-36)

(i) Pharaoh's dreams (41:1-8)

1 Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile.

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1 Two years later—to the day—Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile River,
1 And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.

- Two years transpired between Gen 40-41, but Joseph's faith in God remained strong

2 And behold, from the Nile seven cows came up, fine-looking and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass.

2 And lo, from the Nile there came up seven cows, sleek and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass.

2 when all of a sudden seven healthy, plump cows emerged from the Nile to graze in the grass that grew in the reeds that lined the bank.

2 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

3 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them from the Nile, ugly and thin, and they stood by the *other* cows on the bank of the Nile.

3 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.

3 Right after that, seven more cows came up out of the Nile. Ugly and gaunt, they stood next to the other cows on the bank of the Nile River.

3 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river.

4 Then the ugly and thin cows ate the seven fine-looking and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke.

4 The ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke.

4 But all of a sudden they ate up the seven healthy, plump cows! Then Pharaoh woke up.

4 And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

5 But he fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good.

5 He fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good.

5 After he had fallen back to sleep, he had a second dream, in which seven ears of plump, fruit-filled grain grew up on a single stalk.

5 And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good.

6 Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the **eastwind**, sprouted up after them.
6 Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them.
6 Suddenly seven thin ears of grain that had been scorched by an east wind sprouted up right after them
6 And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them.
- "...east wind" - the *sharav* or *chamsin* is the hot dry east wind that appears periodically, causing dryness over the land (Ezek 17:10; Hosea 13:15)

7 And the thin ears swallowed the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, *it was a dream*.
7 The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, *it was a dream*.
7 and ate up the seven plump, fruit-filled ears. Then Pharaoh woke up a second time, and it had been a very vivid dream!
7 And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.
- Pharaoh's two dreams caused him great distress, especially since none of the wise men of Egypt could explain them
— God used an Israelite slave to confound the wisdom of Egypt
(Later, in the days of Moses, another Pharaoh would be at the mercy of God's power)
8 Now in the morning his spirit was troubled, so he sent *messengers* and called for all the **soothsayerpriests** of Egypt, and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh.
8 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.
8 The very next morning, he was frustrated about the dream, so he sent word to summon all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them what he had dreamed, but no one could interpret them.
8 And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.
- The two dreams had the effect on Pharaoh that God desired
- "...soothsayer priests" - *chartumim*, "sacred scribes" or those who were "deciphers of hieroglyphics"
— The Hebrew word is used only here in Genesis, but used seven times of the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses in Ex 7-9

- The magicians belonged to a guild who were expert in handling the ritual books of occult and priestcraft; however, they could not interpret Pharaoh's dreams
- A later guild of wise men in Babylon also would be unable to interpret a king's dream, and God would use another Hebrew slave, Daniel, to show that no matter how powerful a nation might be, it is still not beyond God's sovereign control
- In addition to the magicians, Pharaoh also called "wise men" or the expositors of ritual books; these were the experts of priestly craft or magic

(ii) Joseph recommended (41:9-13)

9 Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, "I would make mention today of my own offenses.

9 Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, "I would make mention today of my own offenses.

9 Then Pharaoh's senior security advisor spoke up. "Maybe I should make a confession.

9 Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day:

10 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.

10 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.

10 When Pharaoh was angry with some of his servants, he incarcerated me in custody of the captain of the bodyguard, along with Pharaoh's head chef.

10 Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker:

11 Then we had a dream one night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his *own* dream.

11 We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his *own* dream.

11 We each had a dream on the same night, and each dream had its own meaning.

11 And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

12 Now a Hebrew youth was there with us, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we told him *the dreams*, and he interpreted our dreams for us. For each man he interpreted according to his *own* dream.

12 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.

12 There was a Hebrew young man incarcerated with us, who was also working as a servant to the captain of the bodyguard.

"We each related our dreams, and then he interpreted them for us. He provided specific meanings for each of our dreams.

12 And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret.

13 And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; *Pharaoh* restored me in my office, but he hanged the chief baker."

13 And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him."

13 And what he interpreted for each of us came true! Pharaoh restored me to my responsibilities, but he executed the other man."

13 And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

- After two years of purposefully forgetting Joseph, God set the stage for Joseph's elevation by the dreams and the recollection of the butler

(iii) Joseph's interpretation (41:14-32)

14 Then Pharaoh sent word 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.

14 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.

14 Pharaoh sent word to summon Joseph quickly from the dungeon, so they shaved his beard, changed his clothes, and then sent him straight to Pharaoh.

14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

- The Egyptians did not approve of beards; in Egyptian paintings, Semites are pictured with beards while Egyptians are always clean shaven

15 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."

15 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."

15 "I've had a dream," Pharaoh told Joseph, "but nobody can interpret it. I've heard that you can interpret dreams."

15 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.

16 Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, "It has nothing to do with me; God will give Pharaoh an answer for his own good."

16 Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."

16 "I can't do that," Joseph replied, "but God is concerned about Pharaoh's well-being."

16 And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

- Joseph makes it clear that he could not, of himself, interpret dreams, but he had a God who could

— This did not mean that the interpretation itself will be good news, but that Pharaoh will have satisfaction in knowing the meaning of his dreams

17 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "In my dream, there I was, standing on the bank of the Nile;

17 So Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, "In my dream, behold, I was standing on the bank of the Nile;

17 So Pharaoh told Joseph, "In my dream, I was standing on the bank of the Nile River,

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river:

18 and behold, seven cows, fat and fine-looking came up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the marsh grass.

18 and behold, seven cows, fat and sleek came up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the marsh grass.

18 and all of a sudden seven healthy, plump, beautiful cows emerged from the Nile and began to graze among the reeds that line the bank.

18 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow:

19 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and thin, such as I had never seen for ugliness in all the land of Egypt;

19 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;

19 Just then, seven other cows emerged after them, poor, ugly, and appearing very gaunt in their flesh. I've never seen anything as ugly as those cows anywhere in the entire land of

Egypt!

19 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness:

- The fact that Pharaoh had never seen such thin cows in all of Egypt was new revelation, not revealed earlier to the magicians and wise men

20 and the thin and ugly cows ate the first seven fat cows.

20 and the lean and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows.

20 But those thin, gaunt cows gobbled up the first seven healthy cows!

20 And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine:

21 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.

21 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.

21 Not only that," Pharaoh continued, "after they had finished devouring the cows, nobody could tell that they had gobbled them up, because they were just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.

21 And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke.

- After the thin cows ate the fat cows, they were still thin cows; this was also new revelation, not revealed earlier to the magicians and wise men

22 I saw also in my dream, and behold, seven ears of grain, full and good, came up on a single stalk;

22 I saw also in my dream, and behold, seven ears, full and good, came up on a single stalk;

22 Later, I also dreamed about seven plump, fruit-filled ears of grain that grew up out of a single stalk.

22 And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good:

23 and behold, seven ears, withered, thin, *and* scorched by the east wind sprouted up after them;

23 and lo, seven ears, withered, thin, *and* scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them;

23 All of a sudden, seven thin, withered ears of grain, scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them.

23 And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them:

24 and the thin ears swallowed the seven good ears. Then I told it to the soothsayer priests, but there was no one who could explain it to me."

24 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."

24 But the thin ears gobbled up the seven good ears. I told all this to my advisors, but nobody was able to explain it to me."

24 And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me.

25 And Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one *and the same*; God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do.

25 Now Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one *and the same*; God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do.

25 "Pharaoh's dreams are identical," Joseph replied. "God has told Pharaoh what he is getting ready to do.

25 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

- Both dreams meant the same thing, so there will be only one interpretation instead of two
- The dreams were divine revelation of the future of a pagan king; the same will be true of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2)

26 The seven good cows are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one *and the same*.

26 The seven good cows are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one *and the same*.

26 The seven healthy cows represent seven years, as do the seven healthy ears. The dreams are identical.

26 The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one.

- The seven fat cows and good ears both represent seven years of abundance

27 The seven thin 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.

27 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.

27 The seven gaunt cows that arose after the healthy cows are seven years, as are the seven gaunt ears scorched by the east wind. There will be seven years of famine.

27 And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine.

- The seven thin cows and empty ears of corn represent seven years of famine

28 It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do.

28 It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do.

28 So the message that I have for Pharaoh is that God is telling Pharaoh what he is getting ready to do.

28 This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

- Cf. Amos 3:7

29 Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt;

29 Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt;

29 Be advised that seven years of phenomenal abundance are coming throughout all the land of Egypt,

29 Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

- Joseph now goes into a deeper interpretation of the dreams

30 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.

30 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.

30 but after them seven years of famine are ahead, during which all of the abundance will be forgotten throughout the land of Egypt. The famine will ravage the land so severely that

30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;

- The Nile River was the lifeline of Egypt, since it has virtually no rainfall throughout the year. Egypt is dependent upon periodic flooding of the Nile to moisten the land and the plantings.

— Joseph's interpretation was that the Nile would flow in abundance for the first seven years, but will recede into inadequacy for the next seven years

31 So the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it *will* be very severe.

31 So the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it *will be* very severe.

31 there will be no surplus in the land due to the coming famine, because it will be very severe.

31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous.

32 Now as for the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, *it means* that the matter is confirmed by God, and God will quickly bring it about.

32 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.

32 "Now since Pharaoh had that dream twice, it means that this event has been scheduled by God, and God will bring it to pass very soon.

32 And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

- There were two dreams, both with the same interpretation to drive the point home

- During God's dealings with him several things must have been on Joseph's mind:

— His own two dreams

— His two imprisonments (37:36; 39:20)

— The two dreamers in prison

— Pharaoh's two dreams

(iv) Joseph's advice (41:33-36)

33 So now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and appoint him over the land of Egypt.

33 Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

33 Therefore let Pharaoh select a wise, discerning person to place in charge over the land of Egypt.

33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

- Joseph advised Pharaoh to appoint an economic czar and staff to manage the food supply

34 Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers in charge of the land, and let him take a fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt as a tax in the seven years of abundance.

34 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.

34 Also, let Pharaoh immediately proceed to appoint supervisors over the land of Egypt, who will collect one fifth of its agricultural production during the coming seven years of abundance.

34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

35 Then have them collect 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 have them guard *it*.

35 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*.

35 Let them collect all the food during the coming fruitful years, store up the grain in cities governed by Pharaoh's authority, and place it under guard.

35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

- Joseph advised Pharaoh to choose a wise man who would oversee storing 20 percent of the grain during each of the years of plenty for the coming years of famine

— Wisely planning ahead is a basic principle of practical living

36 Let the food be *used* 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."

36 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."

36 Let the food be kept in reserve to feed the land for the seven years of famine that will occur throughout Egypt, so the people don't die during the famine."

36 And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.

(c) Joseph's promotion (41:37-57)

(i) Joseph's promotion (41:37-45)

37 Now the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants.

37 Now the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants.

37 What Joseph proposed pleased Pharaoh and all of his advisors,

37 And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

38 Then Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom there is a divine spirit?"

38 Then Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?"

38 so Pharaoh asked his servants, "Can we find anyone else like this—someone in whom the **Spirit of God** lives?

38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

- "...Spirit of God" [ISV] - the Egyptians knew nothing of the third Person of the Godhead, so "Spirit" here is better rendered "spirit of the gods"

— This was the same view held by the pagans of Daniel, and Daniel was said to have "the spirit of the gods" (Dan 4:8-9,18; 5:14)

39 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you are.

39 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are.

39 Since God has revealed all of this to you," Pharaoh told Joseph, "there is no one so wise and discerning as you.

39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:

- There was no one else in Egypt qualified for this important position than Joseph

40 You shall be in charge of my house, and all my people shall be obedient to you; only *regarding the throne* will I be greater than you."

40 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."

40 So you are to be appointed in charge over my palace, and all of my people are to do whatever you command them to do. Only the throne will have greater authority than you."

40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

- Joseph had been faithful over all the little things God sent him; now he would become ruler over all the land of Egypt under Pharaoh

— Just as Potiphar and the prison guard had elevated Joseph to the second highest position, now Pharaoh did the same

— This promotion would have put Joseph in authority of both Potiphar and the prison warden

41 Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "See, I have placed you over all the land of Egypt."

41 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt."

41 "Look!" Pharaoh confirmed to Joseph, "I've put you in charge of the entire land of Egypt!"

41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

- Joseph became the "Prime Minister" of Egypt

— This promotion is repeated three times (41:43; 42:6; 45:8)

42 Then Pharaoh took off his **signetring** 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.

42 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.

42 Then Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his hand, placed it on Joseph's hand, had him clothed in fine linen garments, and placed a gold chain around his neck.

42 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;

- "...signet ring" - a symbol of authority, which gave Joseph royal authority to issue decrees sealed with the Pharaoh's ring

43 And he had him ride in his second chariot; and they proclaimed ahead of him, "Bow the knee!" And he placed him over all the land of Egypt.

43 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.

43 Then he provided him with a chariot as his second-in-command, outfitted with a group of people who shouted out in front of him, "Bow your knees!" And that's how Pharaoh set Joseph over the entire land of Egypt.

43 And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.

- As Joseph rode in the chariot, heralds were sent out in advance with the command to bow their knee to Joseph

- The words of Mordecai to Esther might well have been spoken to Joseph: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:4)

44 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."

44 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."

44 Pharaoh also told Joseph, "I'm still Pharaoh, but without your permission nobody in all of the land of Egypt will so much as lift up their hands or take a step!"

44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.

45 Then Pharaoh named Joseph **Zaphenath-paneah**; and he gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, to be *his* wife. And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

45 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.

45 Pharaoh also changed Joseph's name to Zaphenath-paneah and gave Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On, to him as his wife. And that's how Joseph gained authority over the land of Egypt.

45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

— "...Zaphenath-paneah" - various definitions from scholars: "the God speaks and he lives" or God has spoken and he shall live"; "he" refers to Pharaoh

— Others believe "he" refers to God Himself ("He")

— In the Coptic, according to some scholars: "a revealer of secrets" or "the man to whom secrets are revealed"

— The name was Pharaoh's means of acknowledging Joseph's divine wisdom

— Joseph means "adding" (30:24)

— Thus, Joseph may be said to be his *human* name and Zaphnath-paaneah his *divine* name. So, also, the one whom Joseph foreshadowed has a double name: "Jesus" being His *human* name, "Christ" signifying "the Anointed" of God; or, again, we have His double name in "Son of Man" which speaks of His humanity, and "Son of God" which tells of His Deity.

- As a token of Joseph's new status, Pharaoh gave him a wife, Asenath, from the priestly family of On, a city which was a center of sun worship, seven miles north of Cairo (also known as Heliopolis)

— It was customary for the owner to provide a wife for his slaves

— "Aseneth" was an Egyptian name meaning "she of Neith"; she was named after an Egyptian goddess

— So Joseph was married into a pagan, priestly family

— After this passage, she is only mentioned again in 46:20

- Cf. Gen 50:20; John 12:24; Heb 2:10

Gentile Brides

Husband	Wife
Adam	Eve
Isaac	Rebekah
Joseph	Asenath

Moses	Zipporah
Salmon	Rahab
Boaz	Ruth
Christ	Church

...all have no death recorded!

See [7 Gentile Brides](#) for explanations on how each is a type of the Church.

(ii) Joseph's administration (41:46-57)

(a) Joseph's stewardship (41:46-49)

46 Now Joseph was thirty years old when he stood in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt.

46 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.

46 Joseph was 30 years old when he began to serve Pharaoh, king of Egypt, by traveling throughout the land of Egypt, independent from Pharaoh's oversight.

46 And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.
- From the prison to the palace in one day! Joseph was 30 at the time of his installment, 13 years after he was sold by his brothers (Cf. 37:2)

— He will meet his brothers nine years later, at the age of 39. Thus, a total separation of 20 years elapsed from the time he had last seen members of his family until they were reunited in Egypt.

- Joseph traveled throughout the land, exercising his authority; he took a survey of the land as part of his new position

The Hyksos Period, during which Joseph's story unfolds, roughly encompassed the 200-year period from 1750 until 1550 BC. The Hyksos were Semitic rulers that conquered Egypt, established the 15th dynasty, and are believed to have ruled into the 17th dynasty. Thus the Pharaoh at the time of Joseph was Semitic. This explains how a Semite such as Joseph could rise to the second highest position in Egypt, which had a Hamitic population.

47 During the seven years of plenty the land produced abundantly.

47 During the seven years of plenty the land brought forth abundantly.

47 While bumper crops grew during the seven abundant years,

47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.

48 So he collected all the food of *these* seven years which occurred in the land of Egypt and put the food in the cities; he put in every city the food from its own surrounding fields.

48 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.

48 Joseph collected the surplus food throughout the land of Egypt, storing food in cities; that is, he gathered the food from fields that surrounded every city and stored it there.

48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.

- This begins the description of the seven years of abundance

- The food was stored in the cities, not out in the rural areas

49 Joseph stored up grain in great abundance like the sand of the sea, until he stopped measuring *it*, for it was beyond measure.

49 Thus Joseph stored up grain in great abundance like the sand of the sea, until he stopped measuring *it*, for it was beyond measure.

49 Joseph stored up so much grain—like sand on the seashore in so much abundance!—that he stopped keeping records because it was proving to be impossible to measure how much they were gathering.

49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.

- There was such abundance that it finally became impossible to keep track of it all

Ps 105:16-22 speaks of Joseph's imprisonment, release, and rise to power...

(b) Joseph's children (41:50-52)

50 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.

50 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.

50 Before the years of famine arrived, Joseph fathered two sons with Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On.

50 And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him.

51 Joseph named the firstborn **Manasseh**; "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my trouble and all of my father's household."

51 Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household."

51 Joseph named his firstborn son Manasseh because, he said, "God has made me forget all of my hard life and my father's house."

51 And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

- "...Manasseh" - "making to forget"; the firstborn was given a Hebrew name, not an Egyptian name

— God made Joseph forget his hard life and father's house, not in the sense of being out of his mind, but forgotten in the sense that his wounds were healed

52 And he named the second **Ephraim**; "For," he said, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

52 He named the second Ephraim, "For," he said, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

52 He named his second son Ephraim because, he said, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my troubles."

52 And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

- "...Ephraim" - "double fruit"; also a Hebrew name

— The fact that Joseph gave both of his sons Hebrew names shows that he had not adopted the Egyptian culture or religion

— His marriage to a pagan was the result of an order from the king and something he did not have much choice over

— Joseph was now elevated to what is called "the good life," but he still viewed Egypt as the land of affliction because his true homeland was not the land of his birth (Haran) or the land where he lived (Egypt)

(c) World comes to Egypt (41:53-57)

53 When the seven years of plenty which had taken place in the land of Egypt came to an end,

53 When the seven years of plenty which had been in the land of Egypt came to an end,

53 As soon as the seven years of abundance throughout the land of Egypt ended,

53 And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

54 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.

54 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.

54 the seven years of famine started, just as Joseph had predicted. It was an international famine, but there was food everywhere throughout the land of Egypt.

54 And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

- The coming of the famine validated Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams
- The famine extended to lands outside Egypt as well, because they did not prepare as Joseph did for Egypt; thus, they ran out of food very quickly
- While the famine hit Egypt as well, and although no new produce was harvested, the people had food because of Joseph's preparations

55 So when all the land of Egypt suffered famine, 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."

55 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."

55 Eventually, the land of Egypt began to feel the effects of the famine, so the people cried out to Pharaoh for food. "Go see Joseph," Pharaoh announced to all the Egyptians, "and do whatever he tells you to do."

55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

56 When the famine was spread over the entire face of the earth, then Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians; and the famine was severe in the land of Egypt.

56 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.

56 Joseph opened all of the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, because the famine was beginning to be severe throughout the land of Egypt.

56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.

57 Then *the people* of all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.

57 *The people of all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.*

57 In addition, all of the surrounding nations came to Joseph to buy grain from Egypt, because the famine had become severe throughout the world.

57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

- This set the stage for the visit of Joseph's brothers