

Genesis 40-41

Worldview: God Has Revealed His Plan to Man

And the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" (Num 12:5-8)

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (Heb 1:1-2)

Part 1: Do Not Interpretations Belong to God? (Gen 40:1-8)

1. The cupbearer and chief baker join Joseph in jail.
2. The two men have dreams and are troubled by them, because they don't know what they mean.
3. Joseph points out that interpretations belong to God and asks that they recount the dream.

Questions:

1. **Did the servants anger the king? Did the king put them in jail?**
2. **Who directed the events leading to the king's servants being jailed?**
3. **Why did the servants dream what they dreamed?**

Part 2: Dreams and Outcomes (Gen 40:9-23)

1. The cupbearer's dream: A vine with 3 branches appears. It buds, blossoms, and clusters ripen into grapes. He presses the grapes into Pharaoh's cup and places the cup in Pharaoh's hand.
2. The interpretation: The 3 branches are 3 days. In 3 days, Pharaoh will restore him to his office and he will place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly.
3. Joseph asks the cupbearer to remember him.
4. The chief baker's dream: He had 3 cake baskets on his head. The top basket had baked food for Pharaoh but birds were eating it.
5. The interpretation: The 3 baskets are 3 days. In 3 days, Pharaoh will lift up your head – from you and hang you on a tree – the birds will eat your flesh.
6. 3 days later: Pharaoh's birthday – events happen exactly as Joseph described.
7. Joseph was forgotten

Questions:

1. **Who interprets the dreams?**
2. **How are the words of Joseph like the words of Scripture? How are they different?**

Part 3: God will Give Pharaoh a Favorable Answer (Gen 41:1-16)

1. Pharaoh's first dream: 7 attractive and plump cows come up out of the Nile and feed on the reed grass. 7 ugly and thin cows come up and stand on the bank. The thin cows eat the attractive cows.
2. Pharaoh's second dream: Seven plump and good ears of grain were growing on one stalk. Seven thin and blighted ears sprout and swallow the good ears.

3. He sends for the magicians and wise men to interpret his dreams but nobody can.
4. The cupbearer remembers Joseph and recounts his dream experience to Pharaoh.
5. Pharaoh sends for Joseph and they “brought him out of the pit” and clean him up.
6. Pharaoh recounts his dream to Joseph to see if he can interpret it.
7. Joseph can’t. God can.

Question:

1. **In Galatians 4:4, Paul speaks of the “fullness of time”. Discuss the events to this point and how the “fullness of time” factors into the timing of the events.**

Part 4: The Thing Fixed by God (Gen 41:17-36)

1. Pharaoh recounts the dreams to Joseph.
2. The interpretation: The 7 good cows and the 7 good ears are 7 years. The 7 thin cows and 7 bad ears are 7 years of famine. God will bring 7 years of plenty to Egypt and then 7 years of famine.
3. The doubling of the dream means that the thing is fixed by God – he will shortly bring it about.
4. Joseph recommends that Pharaoh select someone to oversee efforts to prepare for the famine.

Question:

1. **“Christian” “numerologist” David Meade has predicted the rapture will occur between May and December of this year. What are the criteria for assessing a “prophet’s” credibility?**

Part 5: See, I Have Set You Over All the Land of Egypt (Gen 41:37-57)

1. Pharaoh says to his servants – “Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God”?
2. He puts Joseph over the entire country – “Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you”.
3. He puts his signet ring on his hand and clothes him in fine garments.
4. He made him ride in his second chariot and they called out before him “Bow the knee”.
5. He gives Joseph and Egyptian wife
6. Joseph spends 7 years preparing for the famine.
7. He has two sons – Manasseh and Ephraim.
8. Once the famine comes, “all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain”.

Questions:

1. **How old was Joseph when he entered Pharaoh’s service?**
2. **What do the names Manasseh and Ephraim mean?**
3. **Who puts Joseph in charge of Egypt?**
4. **Why does a loving God bring famine on the whole earth?**
5. **Did Native Americans come to Joseph to buy grain? The Chinese? Why or why not? Depending on your answer, is Scripture in error? Why or why not? See Colossians 1:5b-6**

Next Week: Genesis 42-43