

May 15, 2011

# **GO! GO! GO! JOSEPH!**

## **Genesis 40 – 41**

### *Genesis 40:1-4*

- 1 Cupbearer and baker are High Court positions, often influential in the court decisions  
3 “in the house of the captain of the guard”- this was Potiphar’s title in 37:36  
4 This captain of the guard is likely a different man than Potiphar  
“continued for some time in custody”- we will receive some time markers later in this story

### *Genesis 40:5-15*

- 6-7 “he saw that they were troubled”- Joseph is a caring and virtuous man, even in prison  
*St. John Chrysostom: This remarkable man, however, concerned for their comfort, noticed that they were dismayed by the experience of the dreams and confused in mind; ...so, when he saw them lost in dejection from the experience of their dreams, he questioned them to discover the cause. See how, even when he found himself in prison, he gave evidence of his characteristic virtue and was concerned to relieve the sadness of others.*  
8 “there is no one to interpret them”- they do not have access to the court wise men any more  
13 “Pharaoh will lift up your head”- a very curious word choice, calls to mind beheading!  
14-15 Joseph earnestly pleads for mercy as he has been greatly mistreated  
“the pit”- can mean dungeon but is the same word used for the cistern in 37:20

### *Genesis 40:16-22*

- 16-17 The differences between the cup bearer’s dream and the baker’s dream are fairly obvious  
19 Here we see the double meaning of “lift up your head”  
20 “Pharaoh’s birthday”- Egyptian texts indicate some prisoners were pardoned on such an occasion

### *Genesis 41:1-13*

- 1 “two whole years”- since the cup bearer had been restored, more time references to come  
2-7 We will get the description of the dream twice in this chapter, hence the length of the chapter  
8 “magicians”- a Hebrew word used only of Egyptian and Babylonian occult practitioners  
“wise men”- men who practice divination  
9 “I remember my sins today”- he had made a promise and broken it with forgetfulness  
12 “young Hebrew”- Joseph was about 28 at that time  
13 “and as he interpreted to us”- who did Joseph say the interpretation belonged to? (40:8)

### *Genesis 41:14-36*

- 14 “brought him out of the pit”- the resurrection side of this Death & Resurrection motif  
“when he had shaved himself”- he would be groomed and dressed as an Egyptian before Pharaoh  
16 “It is not in me; God will answer Pharaoh with peace (shalom).”- a good confession of Faith  
17-24 The second telling of the dream  
29-31 God has revealed to Joseph what it means- 7 good years followed by 7 bad years  
33-36 Marvelously, Joseph gives more than an interpretation, he prescribes what should be done!!

Genesis 41:37-45

- 38 “in whom is the Spirit of God”- the Hebrew is not monotheistic because Pharaoh is not converting  
40 Joseph became the highest ranking official throughout Egypt, second only to Pharaoh  
42 signet ring, garments of fine linen, gold chain- these would be conferred in ceremonial acts  
45 “Zaphenath-paneah”- could mean “revealer of hidden things” or “the god speaks and he lives”  
“Asenath”- means “belonging to the goddess Neith”  
“Potiphara”- name means “he whom Ra has given”  
“Priest of On”- may be the priest of Ra in the city of On (later called Heliopolis)

Genesis 41:46-52

- 46 “thirty years old”- it had been 13 years since he had been sold into slavery  
51 “Manasseh”- Hebrew root is “cause to forget”- the stated meaning in the text is VERY important!  
52 “Ephraim”- Hebrew root is “making fruitful”- a much more amiable name than Manasseh  
“in the land of my affliction”- this side of the death & resurrection motif is still in play

Genesis 41:53-57

- 53 “seven years...came to an end”- Zaphenath-paneah is now 37 years old  
54 “in all the land of Egypt there was bread”- very reminiscent of the 4<sup>th</sup> petition of the Lord’s Prayer

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

*What does this mean?--Answer.*

God gives daily bread, even without our prayer, to all wicked men; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it, and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

*What is meant by daily bread?--Answer.*

Everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as meat, drink, clothing, shoes, house, homestead, field, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful magistrates, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

- 57 Joseph is responsible for great economic growth in Egypt

*TLSB summary- After years of frustration, Joseph is exalted to oversee the storage and distribution of Egypt’s great harvests. As the years of famine being to take their toll, there is enough surplus to share with those in need throughout all the earth. In hard times, those who have should share with those who have not. Here is comfort: after long periods of suffering, at just the right time, the Lord will give help to His people, just as He did for Joseph. Through His Son, Jesus, God rules over us and gives us what we need: pardon, provision, and peace.*

*Heavenly Father, give us this day our daily bread, and deliver us from evil, for Jesus’ sake, Amen.*

