



BAND of BROTHERS

SPRING SERIES 2023 – WEEK 8

Genesis 41: Well Worth the Wait

*Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.
For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.*
– Isaiah 30:18 ESV

- **Far from forgotten**

“...please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I’m here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it.” – Genesis 40:14-15 NLT

- Two more years have passed
 - Joseph remains in prison
 - Serving time for a crime he didn’t commit
 - But he is not alone or forsaken

“I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands...” – Isaiah 49:15-16 NLT

...the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. – Deuteronomy 31:8 ESV

...the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. – Joshua 1:9 ESV

“For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘Fear not, I am the one who helps you.’” – Isaiah 41:13 ESV

- **God’s waiting room**

After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile... – Genesis 41:1 ESV

- God had Joseph right where He wanted him

- In the perfect place
- Waiting on God's perfect timing
- So he could be used to do God's perfect will

"What God does in us while we wait is as important as what we are waiting for." – John Ortberg

*Therefore **the Lord waits to be gracious to you,**
and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.
For the Lord is a God of justice;
blesed are all those who wait for him. – Isaiah 30:18 ESV*

- God is in no hurry
 - He is never frantic or frenetic
 - He is never surprised or stumped
 - He is never reactionary or rash
- God is never late

*The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul who seeks him.
It is good that one should wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord. – Lamentations 3:25-26 ESV*

Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act. Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes. – Psalm 37:7 ESV

- **Wait for it...!**

- Why the two-year delay?
- What was God waiting for?
 - The timing of His pre-ordained plan
 - Remember: God is NOT reacting
 - He is unveiling His perfectly-timed plan
 - Put in place before the world was made

*But when **the fullness of time had come,** God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. – Galatians 4:4-5 ESV*

*For while we were still weak, **at the right time** Christ died for the ungodly. – Romans 5:6 ESV*

*Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, **until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.** – Romans 11:25 ESV*

- God's calendar has been pre-set
- Everything is unfolding according to plan

- **Not just a dream, but a vision**

- Pharaoh had a two-part dream
- It's similar in nature to the two dreams of the cupbearer and baker

Part 1

7 plump cows
 7 scrawny cows
 The 2nd one at the 1st one

Part 2

7 plump ears of grain
 7 thin ears of grain
 The 2nd one swallowed the 1st ones

So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh. – Genesis 41:8 ESV

- **God alone**

- Pharaoh's magicians and wisemen failed

magician – *hartōm* – diviner, one possessed of occult knowledge, dream interpreter

wiseman – *hākām* – learned, professional consultants

- These men were relying on false gods
- Remember what Joseph said earlier:
*“Do not interpretations belong to **God**?” – 40:8*
- He purposefully uses the generic term: *ēlōhîm*
 - It's a Hebrew word meaning “gods”
 - But Joseph is referring to the **one true God**

- The chief cupbearer tells Pharaoh about Joseph

*A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream. **And as he interpreted to us, so it came about.** I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged.” – Genesis 41:12-13 ESV*

- Joseph was the **relator**, not the **interpreter**
- His words came from God

- **Making dreams and nightmares come true**

- God was behind it all
 - The dreams of Joseph
 - The dreams of the baker and cupbearer
 - And even the dreams of Pharaoh

*Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." Joseph answered Pharaoh, "It is not in me; **God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.**" – Genesis 41:14-16 ESV*

- "A favorable answer"
'ānâ šālôm – "an answer of peace"
 - Joseph isn't speculating
 - He knew that God would be **favorable**
 - The interpretation would be **beneficial**

- The interpretation

*Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; **God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do.**" – Genesis 41:25*

- From one sovereign to another
 - God is telling Pharaoh His divine plans
...and Pharaoh will be defenseless against them
 - God will tell Pharaoh exactly what to do
...and Pharaoh will obey Him

*"The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. It is as I told Pharaoh; **God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do.**" – Genesis 41:26-28*

● **God's will is inevitable and unstoppable**

- He is not **forecasting** the weather
- He is **foretelling** His divine plan

Seven good cows
+ Seven good ears

Seven lean cows
+ Seven dried ears

Seven years of plenty

Seven years of famine

"The next seven years will be a period of great prosperity throughout the land of Egypt. But afterward there will be seven years of famine so great that all the prosperity will be forgotten in Egypt. Famine will destroy the land." – Genesis 41:29-30 NLT

- This is God's **pre-ordained, sovereign will**
 - It has been **predetermined** by God

- And all according to His **prescribed** timetable

*“And the doubling of Pharaoh’s dream means that **the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about.**” – Genesis 41:29 ESV*

fixed – *kûn* – prepared, firmly established, certain

- It is set in stone
 - It is an integral part of a bigger plan
 - It must take place
 - It has been perfectly and painstakingly timed

- **Some unsolicited advice**

***Now therefore** let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. – Genesis 41:33 ESV*

- Joseph assumes the role of an unpaid consultant
 - Handing out recommended next steps
 - But he is simply relaying the will of God
 - This is all part of the interpretation
- Joseph is NOT recommending himself
 - He is conveying God’s counsel
 - But who has God been blessing?
 - Who has God given great success?

*...the Lord was with him and...the Lord caused **all that he did to succeed** in his hands... – Genesis 39:3 ESV*

*...the Lord was with him. And **whatever he did, the Lord made it succeed.** – Genesis 39:23 ESV*

- Joseph presents God’s 7-year executive plan
 - Replace your wisemen with a wise man
 - Appoint qualified overseers
 - Collect 20% of all produce grown in Egypt
 - Place it in reserve for the future

*So Pharaoh asked his officials, “Can we find anyone else like this man so obviously **filled with the spirit of God?**” – Genesis 41:38 NLT*

- **Sold, enslaved, imprisoned, and promoted**

- Joseph’s rise to prominence is staggering
- But he was born for this moment
 - Pharaoh recognized his wisdom
 - He promoted to a position of power
 - He rewarded him with wealth

- And he demanded his veneration

*And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, “**Bow the knee!**” Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. – Genesis 41:43 ESV*

Remember what Joseph’s brothers said:

*“**So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?**” – Genesis 37:8 NLT*

Remember what Joseph’s father said:

*“**Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?**” – Genesis 37:10 NLT*

Two very different responses:

Genesis 37:23-24

So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty...

Genesis 41:42

Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph’s hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. And he made him ride in his second chariot.

- **God’s 30-year plan**

- To move Joseph from the pit to the palace
- And from slavery to sovereignty
- So he could accomplish God’s will

So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth. – Genesis 41:55-56

- **Discussion questions**

Discuss how all the events of Joseph’s life reflect the sovereign hand of God and His impeccable timing.

How had the 30-delay prepared Joseph for the life-changing events in his life? Why was it necessary?

How could we make Isaiah 30:18 a reality in our own lives this week? Why is waiting on God worth it?



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SPRING SERIES 2023 – WEEK 9 HOMEWORK

WEEK 9 – Genesis 41-43: Dead Man Walking

Proverbs 32:23 states, “be sure your sin will find you out,” and the veracity of that statement is on full display in these two chapters. This lesson will bring the sin committed by Joseph’s brothers into the glaring light of Pharaoh’s court. As these ten men make their way to Egypt in an attempt to purchase land for their starving families back home in Canaan, they have no idea that their past is about to come back and haunt them. Upon their arrival in Egypt, they unknowingly come face to face with their former brother who they had long ago given up for dead. But Joseph is alive and well and in full control of their fates. He holds their lives and the future of the Israelite nation in his hands. Through a series of almost comic encounters between the oblivious brothers and their powerful younger brother, Joseph prepares to orchestrate a family reunion that will have lasting implications.

- Read chapters 41-42 in one sitting. Familiarize yourself with all the details of the passage and then write down anything that catches your attention.
- Now read pages 153-169 of Ken’s Devotional™ on Genesis Part II.
- Before we begin, take a few minutes to write down all the things that happened to Joseph in the chapter 41 after he was elevated to the second-highest position in Egypt.
- Chapter 41 ends with the statement, “Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth” (Genesis 41:57 ESV). Now look at verse 1 of chapter 42. How does it support the idea of God’s sovereignty and His perfectly timed plan?

- Read verses 1-29 of chapter 42. Describe what you see going on here.

What do you think is Joseph's motivation for treating his brothers the way he did?

Verses 18-19 record Joseph's criteria for judging their honesty and integrity. What did he demand and why would this have been a good test for his brothers?

- Now, read verses 29-38. Two times in this narrative, the brothers refer to themselves as honest men. How do you feel about this based on everything you know about them?

What did the brothers discover when they arrived home and why was this another ingenious ploy by Joseph to test his brothers' integrity?

- Chapter 43 records the brothers' return trip to Egypt. What finally forced them to return after a lengthy delay?

What was the one non-negotiable requirement Joseph put on his brothers if they wanted their brother back?

Why would this have proven to be a difficult order for the brothers to obey?

- According to verses 11-14, what does Jacob decide to do before sending his sons back and what does he hope his actions will achieve?

Verses 15-34 describe the second encounter between the brothers and Joseph. How would you describe the overall success or failure of the brothers' attempt to carry out Jacob's wishes?