

GENESIS: Where Grace Begins
The Rise of Joseph, the Dream Interpreter
Genesis 40-41

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. – Mt. 23:12

INTRODUCTION

The key figure in Genesis 37-50 is Joseph. 30% of the book of Genesis is about Joseph. Clearly, Joseph had a unique role to play in redemptive history. However, the reason Moses gives us a close-up of Joseph's life is to show us how active God is. God keeps his covenant *through* Joseph. God fulfills his promises *through* Joseph.

Joseph's life highlights how God's *providence* secures God's *promises*. The narrative of Joseph reminds us that God never leaves us or forsakes His people. He sovereignly orchestrates all things according to His perfect plan. Joseph's story is really the story of the whole Bible. It's the story of glory through suffering, exaltation through humiliation.

CONTEXT

Joseph's story begins in Genesis 37. He's the 17 year old son of Jacob. Jacob played favorites and treated Joseph better than his brothers. As a result, Joseph's brothers hated him. Joseph had a dream that his brothers and his parents would one day bow down to him. He shared that dream with his brothers, causing them to hate him even more. Joseph's brothers resolved to kill him, but Reuben rescued Joseph. Joseph was then sold into slavery and ended up in Egypt.

Joseph was then bought as a slave by Potiphar. He became a trusted manager of Potiphar's entire house. Potiphar's wife slandered Joseph, accused him of rape, and he was thrown into prison. Things do not look good for Joseph, but God is with him. (Gen. 39:21-23)

TAKEAWAYS FROM GENESIS 40-41

Keep the FAITH.

The Bible declares four times, "The righteous shall live by faith." (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38)

Rest in GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.

"In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory." – Eph. 1:11-12

The sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which the child of God rests his head at night, giving perfect peace – C.H. Spurgeon

HUMBLE yourself.

"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." – Mt. 23:12

Remember your REDEEMER.

Jesus, our Lord, will never forget us. Let's not forget him. Let's preach the gospel to ourselves daily and follow Him daily.

Be FILLED with the SPIRIT.

In Genesis 41:38, Pharaoh recognizes that Joseph has the Spirit of God. Can that be said of you?

DREAMS AND VISIONS FOR TODAY

Can God still work through dreams and visions? **YES.**

Does God give dreams and visions to people today? **POSSIBLY.**

Should we expect dreams and visions to be an ordinary occurrence? **NO.**

RATIONALE:

- Biblical dreams and visions were necessary because God's revelation was incomplete. Today, we have the **COMPLETE** canon of Scripture.

"Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² 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

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

- The Bible is **SUFFICIENT**. It includes everything we need for life and salvation.
- God has given his people the **MIND** of Christ (1 Cor. 2:10–16) to think biblically about all of life.
- Texts like Genesis 40-41 are **DESCRIPTIVE**, not **PRESCRIPTIVE** regarding dreams and visions.
- If we start chasing dreams and visions we open ourselves up to **DECEPTION**.

In the only place where dreams are mentioned in the Epistles, Jude 8 warns of false teachers who "rely on their dreams." Through Jeremiah, God said this about the "smooth tongued" false prophets: "Their imaginary dreams are flagrant lies that lead my people into sin. I did not send or appoint them, and they have no message at all for my people" (Jeremiah 23:32).

Do you think you have received a dream or a vision from God? If so,...

1. Check it with **SCRIPTURE**.
2. Get godly **COUNSEL**.
3. Make sure your response to the dream or vision is **IN ALIGNMENT WITH SCRIPTURE**.