

FAITHFULNESS FINALLY PAYS

Genesis 41:1-52

Has GOD forgotten?

Last week we left Joseph back in the jail.

After 2 years of waiting,

Joseph has about given up.

The cupbearer connection is useless/hopeless—he has forgotten!

Maybe GOD has forgotten!!!

Have YOU ever had occasion to wonder that?

Does it sometimes feel like God has forgotten about you?

At last the time is right and God brings about the right circumstances to jog the cupbearer's memory.

Joseph remains forgotten in prison for 2 more years 41:1a "Two full years" 2 long, hard years!

JOSEPH INTERPRETS PHARAOH'S DREAM

41:1-32

Pharaoh has two dreams 41:1-14 1-7

No one can interpret his dreams for him 8

God is about to use Pharaoh's dream as part of the process to fulfill His dream for Joseph.

God's favor and power in Joseph's life at last begin to come into focus.

As, later, in Daniel's life, God's faithful servant is able to do what the wisest leaders in the king's court couldn't do.

God gets this Pharaoh's attention.

The cupbearer remembers Joseph 8-14

Critical situation reminds cupbearer of his forgetfulness. 9-13

When cupbearer tells Pharaoh about Joseph, he's summoned at once.

14

Pharaoh expresses his expectation 15

"I have heard you can do it!"

Joseph explains his ability 16 *"I can't do it! God can do it!"*

"This isn't about me!"

"This is about GOD!"

"Only GOD can interpret dreams!"

God uses an Israelite slave to confound the wisdom of the wise men!

Joseph stands before the most powerful man in the world.

Joseph makes clear that God's in charge!

No matter how powerful pagan nations become, they're still subject to God's control! *He's still in charge!*

"All the king's horses and all the king's men" can't pull this one off!

Neither can Joseph!

Joseph speaks clearly: It's not me! It's God!

Being godly doesn't give US the ability to respond in our own wisdom.

God has to speak through us!

He is the source of the interpretation of dreams (40:8)

We can't speak for God in our own strength!

Joseph has spent years in prison, now he is free.

He has a chance to speak to the king.

What are his first words?

"This isn't about me! It's about God! (Mentions God 4 X's)

HE's the one who interprets dreams!"

He assures Pharaoh that God will reveal the meaning of his dreams.

The way Pharaoh proceeds with the dreams, you can almost hear him saying under his breath: *"Whatever!"*

As long as he gets the interpretation, he doesn't care.

Pharaoh describes his dreams 17-24

Again, Pharaoh observes that no one can figure this out.

His wise men can't make any sense out of this dream—it's strange!

When Pharaoh describes the dreams, . . .

Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams 25-32

In interpreting the dream, Joseph reaffirms that GOD has spoken!

God has revealed what HE's about to do (3 X)

7 years of abundant harvests are coming, followed by 7 years of famine

Joseph goes on to give counsel about what Pharaoh should do next:

JOSEPH GIVES HIS ADVICE 33-36

Pharaoh should prepare for 2nd period by wise administration of resources during 1st.

Name a wise person to take charge of your resources.

Lay aside a 5th of the produce during the good years for use in the lean years

This was not just a means to get Joseph to power; it was also the means by which God would deliver His people, and the world with them, from perishing.

Everyone would see that **God is the delivering God**. Salvation comes from God.

JOSEPH RECEIVES HIS REWARD 37-44 41:37-52; Acts 7:9-18; Ps. 105:17-22

Now you get the idea that Pharaoh is impressed.

He may have been skeptical at first, but now he's willing to hand over the empire to Joseph!

Joseph's success never causes him to forget to depend on God.

He didn't let it "go to his head!"

Joseph was faithful in what God gave him to do, **so God trusts him with more!**

He makes him ruler over greater things.

Following Joseph's counsel, . . .

Pharaoh appoints the wisest person he can find to administer the food plan.

Since only Joseph can interpret God's plan and fully understand what's going to happen, he's the logical choice for the job.

Pharaoh names Joseph, the wise and discerning one, to take charge of the land and its resources **41:33, 38-41**

Joseph becomes 2nd in command over all Egypt. 37-40

Joseph establishes food distribution plan that **provides food for everyone** in the entire region during the great famine. **46-49**

All the surrounding peoples come to depend on Joseph.

Pharaoh gives **Egyptian name** translated: "*God speaks and lives.*" **45**

He gives him a "jet set," elite **Egyptian wife**, with whom he has children to whom he gives Hebrew names.

Acts 7:9-18

GOD gives wisdom, so Pharaoh makes him ruler over all Egypt.

God uses Joseph to protect people until another king arises who doesn't know him.

Psalms 105:17-22

God sends Joseph to Egypt as a slave, and then raises him up and places him over all of Pharaoh's house as teacher to all Pharaoh's wise men.

After years of not seeing what God is doing, . . .

After years of enduring the darkness and the pain, . . .

Joseph finally SEES what God has been doing all the time!!!

Joseph finally receives the reward for faithfulness he's waiting for!

Joseph's sons' names point to God's blessing: 50-52

God makes him forget his trouble!

He has had a change of fortune.

God makes him fruitful!

He is experiencing a new prosperity.

At last he is able to see a brighter future.

Even in famine, (in land where he suffered!) he can trust the faithful God!

God controls the nations to protect and provide for His people.

HOW SHOULD WE THEN LIVE?

1. Trust God, even when we don't understand what He's doing!

Even when we can't figure out how or where He is leading us.

God controls the agricultural economy to bring Joseph to power, and prepare for Israel's move to Egypt where God will unite them as His people.

His plan for our life is good! WE CAN TRUST HIM!

2. Remain faithful, even when faced by powerful people.

–Even in the face of opposition that could destroy us

–or the ability to make us great!

Joseph remains faithful to God before the great Pharaoh, even though he can't be sure how the most powerful man on earth will respond to His message.

He could make or break him!

Joseph takes a risk! HE REMAINS FAITHFUL—come what may!

3. Never forget our dependence on God, no matter how powerful we become.

Though elevated to a position of authority, Joseph never lost sight of his dependence on God.

He knew Who's in charge!

He remained faithful to Him.

In the end, ***IT PAYS TO REMAIN FAITHFUL!***

–Not profit motive!

–Not prosperity gospel! “God wants to make you rich!”

–But it IS a reality of godly living, even if it costs you everything,
in the end it's worth it!

IT PAYS TO REMAIN FAITHFUL!