

## God Can Do That!

“The Life of Joseph: but God Intended It for Good”  
Genesis 41:1-57

November 12, 2017

### BIG IDEA

God exalted Joseph just as he did Jesus. He is in the business of transforming and changing us. No matter what hurdles you face, please know that things *can* change. You *can* gain victory and you *can* be forgiven, because God can do that!

### REVIEW

What are some of the main ideas we discussed last week?

Genesis 40:1-23

- God supernaturally intervened in this story in order to move his redemptive plan forward.
- The baker and cupbearer each had a dream and Joseph, through the power of Yahweh, wisely interpreted the dreams.
- The cupbearer survived, but though he'd promised to tell Pharaoh about Joseph's plight, he didn't. It seemed that God's faithful servant had once again been forgotten. It seemed as though the dream was dead.
- But God had other plans. He has great plans for you too. Even when life takes a terrible turn and you wonder if God and others have forgotten you, Joseph's life is proof that God is always working!

### THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

*Context:*

God rescued Joseph by giving Pharaoh supernatural dreams. The cupbearer finally remembered Joseph. God led Joseph to the throne room in order to interpret the dreams. This was the beginning of God's exaltation of Joseph. He'd been groomed to rule. Now he would. The story continues in verse 41.



## Genesis 41:41-57 (ESV)

<sup>41</sup> And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." <sup>42</sup> 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. <sup>43</sup> 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. <sup>44</sup> Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." <sup>45</sup> And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

<sup>46</sup> Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. <sup>47</sup> During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, <sup>48</sup> and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. <sup>49</sup> And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.

<sup>50</sup> Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore them to him. <sup>51</sup> Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." <sup>52</sup> The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

<sup>53</sup> The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end, <sup>54</sup> and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. <sup>55</sup> When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do."

<sup>56</sup> 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. <sup>57</sup> Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

### MAIN IDEAS

- The exaltation of Joseph was by divine power. This was Joseph's destiny all along. God groomed him to rule by trial and tribulation. Now he would save Israel. Jesus could come as promised!
- Jesus was also exalted by the Father. Joseph's exaltation prefigures that of Jesus. The Lord was taken from the pit, raised to life, and given his rightful place at the right hand of the Father. Now he saves all that come to him in faith.



## 1. God Miraculously Executes the Exaltation of Joseph

Through an elaborate ceremony that prefigures the exaltation of believers and his followers, Joseph became second-in-command in all of Egypt.

*Genesis 41:42-45: 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. <sup>43</sup> 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. <sup>44</sup> Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." <sup>45</sup> And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.*

This is such a striking scene. A Jewish shepherd boy was given the keys to the greatest nation on earth. Only God can shape this type of story. One must sit back in wonder. Only God can do that!

- a. Through trials in your life, God is calling you to himself. Just as God did a miracle in Joseph's life, he is interacting with your story. He is faithful and he will never forsake you. What trials are you facing in this season of your life? Do you trust that God is working through these trials?

Verse 43 makes a stunning announcement. As Joseph rode through the city in a golden chariot his entourage called out: "Bow the knee!" This is a command that lays before us. Jesus is calling us to total submission.

- b. Is there anything that is keeping you from bowing your knee to the Lordship of Jesus? What would submission to Christ look like for you?

## 2. The Exaltation of Joseph Mirrors that of Jesus

*Genesis 41:43: 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.*

*Isaiah 53:11-12: Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous,*



and he shall bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup>Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

*Philippians 2:9-11: Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

*Hebrews 2:9: But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

The journeys of Joseph and Jesus, from the pit to exaltation, come together at this point in the story. The command that stares us in the eyes and shouts back at us cannot be ignored: "Bow down to the exalted Christ!" Someday every knee will bow! You can decide to do it now or later. But on judgment day your sin will have already convicted you. It's your choice. But the command is there nonetheless.

a. Why did Jesus allow himself to be killed before he was finally exalted?

b. Read [Isaiah 53](#). As you read, try to put yourself in the place of Jesus. Take some time to thank him for his sacrifice for sin.

### **3. The Dream is Fulfilled and Joseph Begins to Rule**

*Genesis 41:46-52: Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. <sup>47</sup>During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, <sup>48</sup>and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. <sup>49</sup>And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured. <sup>50</sup>Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest*



of On, bore them to him.<sup>51</sup> Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." <sup>52</sup>The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

The text now does a dance between Joseph's Jewish heritage and his indoctrination into Egyptian culture. He needed to be a part of this culture in order to rule. There is no doubt that God was doing a marvelous thing.

- a. Have there been times when God has called you out of your comfort zone in order to follow his plan? What were the results of these events?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Joseph continually mentions God and gives him the glory in everything while in Egypt, which is reflected even in how he names his children. What are some ways that you can give God the glory in our own culture as you interact with those that do not follow him?

#### **4. God Ultimately Guided the Future of Egypt and He Is Guiding Your Life**

*Genesis 50:20: As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.*

God was constantly working in Joseph's life. And now having come through terrible hardship, confusion, and harmful actions by those around him, Joseph gets the prize. Joseph's life takes him from Canaan to second-in-command of Egypt. God can take you places you never dreamed. Trust him. Bow your knee. Watch him work.

- a. Have you had an experience where someone intended evil against you but God used it for good?



b. With whom can you share what you learned in this week's lesson?

## PRAY

Father God, please build my faith. Help me to trust you. Help me to never doubt you even when suffering strikes. Please do with me what you want. I am yours. Amen.

## DIG DEEPER

For further study this week:

- [The Exalted Christ: And Our Identification With Him In His Exaltation](#) from F.B. Meyer (Forgotten Books).
- "The Forever Exalted Christ" a Blog from John MacArthur:  
<http://bit.ly/2xQM5C4>
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## NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

Genesis 42:1-38

Joseph gives new life to his brothers. This is a wonderful foretaste of the grace we have received from Jesus!

