

"Lost and Found"

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH: GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY IN OUR SUFFERING | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

GENESIS 40:1-41:57 | MARCH 3/4, 2018

*"I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh,
"but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."
(Genesis 41:16)*

Lost: Two Dreams in the Dungeon (40:1-23)

The dreams of the cupbearer and the baker
Joseph's interpretation

Intermission: Waiting on God (40:1, 23; 41:1, 46)

Ten years of waiting
Two more years of waiting

Found: Two Dreams in the Palace (41:1-36)

Pharaoh's two dreams
Wise counselor's inability and God's ability through a humbled man
Joseph's interpretation and plan

Resolution: Restoration by the Lord (41:37-57)

Joseph re-exalted
Joseph re-clothed
Joseph re-familied

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever seen something good arise from something that was apparently bad? How? What happened?
2. We will continue our journey with Joseph this week by looking at Genesis 40-41. Ask God to speak to you through His Word, and then read chapter 40 aloud.
3. Ten years have passed since the conflict in Potiphar's house, all of which Joseph has spent in prison. Two officials find their way to prison because of their wrongs. Who are they and what sent them to prison?
4. Their disturbing dreams bring them into closer connection with Joseph. What are their dreams and what interpretation does Joseph provide (40:5-19)?
5. The dreams come to pass exactly as Joseph said (40:20-23). Return to verse 8. What do you learn about Joseph and his view of God from this verse?
6. Now, read chapter 41 aloud. Two years pass and then Pharaoh has two dreams. What are the dreams? What resources does Pharaoh access to figure them out?
7. The chief cupbearer finally remembers Joseph (see 40:14, 23) and he is brought to Pharaoh. What stands out to you about Joseph's response in 41:16?
8. Pharaoh recounts his dream and Joseph gives the interpretation (41:17-32). Throughout his interpretation notice how Joseph references God. How similar or dissimilar from Joseph's view is your view of God's activity in human history?
9. Joseph makes a three-part suggestion to Pharaoh about how to respond to the dreams (41:33-36). What is Joseph's plan? How does Pharaoh respond (41:47-40)?
10. In 41:41-57 we begin to get a glimpse of the restoration that Joseph experiences after roughly 13 years of imprisonment. How does both the clothing Joseph is given and the children borne to him speak of God's restoration here?
11. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you are on your own, write it down and pray about it. If you are in a small group, take time to discuss this with one another before praying together.

FURTHER REFLECTION:

This week reflect on how God has been at work in your life with this exercise:

1. Write down defining transitions, relationships, events, joys, or challenges on post-it notes (one per post-it note). Use one color for positives and one for negatives.
2. Order the notes chronologically, organizing them into 3-5 significant seasons or chapters of your life. After reflection, give each season or chapter a title.
3. Over the next day or two, write down 2-4 significant lessons you learned about life and/or God during each season or chapter.
4. Spend some time in prayer with God over each season or chapter of your life, thanking Him for how He has been at work.