



... The dream of Pharaoh is one ...

*1 And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. 2 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow. 3 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. 4 And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. (Gen 41:1-4)*

The story of Joseph demonstrates that God can use even the enemies of his people to secure their blessing and best interest. Believing they had done great damage to Joseph, his brethren sold him into slavery. This resulted in Joseph becoming the second ruler in Egypt. Remember the woman taken in adultery (John 8:1-11) was brought by those intending her death to the only one on earth who could give her life! Those are the mysterious workings of God which man can never foil or figure.

So how does Joseph advance from prisoner in Egypt to the second ruler thereof? I am glad you asked, for that is the point of today's devotion.

In days of old dreams were perhaps more vivid sense the imagination was not dampened by the instant gratifications of videos and computer gaming. The imagination was not spoon-fed in old times, but was nurtured as a fig tree planted on virgin soil. Because there were no competing attractions for the imaginations of men, God was able to use the avenue of dreams to transmit messages to his people, and even to those who knew Him not, such as Pharaoh.

Egypt was a land that lay rich and fertile adjoining the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The great Nile River (the longest in the world at more than 4,000 miles length) was fed by the melting snows of the heights of Kilimanjaro – the highest point of Africa. Those cold waters cascaded down to feed into Lake Victoria and, from thence, into the Blue Nile which is the origin of the Nile River Proper. The river flows thousands of miles down the rocky paths and slopes of Africa accumulating rich nutrients and minerals from the soil on its way to the Mediterranean. During hot summer days, the snows melt more rapidly and the waters overflow their banks only in Egypt at a place called the Fertile Crescent where they are most fertile. The waters deposit their rich nutrients in

the fields and planes which border her banks on either side. When the summers are hottest, and famine greatest in most other regions of Africa and Near Asia, the waters of the Nile are more profuse due to the melting snows. Until Pharaoh's dream, Egypt had never wanted for a bountiful harvest.

But Pharaoh did dream, and this was God's planned method of bringing all of Israel down into Egypt (symbolically the place of sin and bondage – see Rev. 11:8) so that they could more fully appreciate His grace and care in bringing them out with a strong, outstretched arm. Moreover, it would be the means by which God would send forth His Angel of Death on that first night of horror in Egypt that was the beginning of the Passover – a plain picture of the sacrifice of Christ whose blood on the door posts and lintels of our heart would alert the Angel of Death to Passover us at the Day of Reckoning which is to come.

Joseph had been 11 years in Egypt when he was confined to prison on false allegations. He spent two more years (verse 1) in prison before being called forth by Pharaoh's counselors to interpret Pharaoh's dream. Joseph was now thirty years old as he stood before Pharaoh (see verse 46). Joseph was tried over an extended period of time, but never relented in his trust and faith in his God. He was an exceptional young man, and that is why God could use Joseph then as He could use similar young men and women of our own day. At the age of thirty, Joseph was ready to undertake his responsibilities as savior of Israel. The same is true of the beginning of the ministry of Christ – Jesus was thirty years old when He began His ministry. (another typical attribute of Joseph)

The Pharaoh who placed his full trust in Joseph was one whose heart was not hardened against the God of Joseph. He trusted Joseph because he recognized the power of God working through him. "And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" (Gen 41:38)

He relates his dream to Joseph which is ordered in two parts: *17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river: 18 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow: 19 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: 20 And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: 21 And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. 22 And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good: 23 And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them: 24 And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me.* (Gen 41:17-24)

Joseph interprets the dream of Pharaoh, not out of his own reason and logic, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. This is recorded in God's Word as a gradual record of His full Word – the Holy Bible. Such dreams are no longer experienced except to substantiate the fullness of the Word given in the Holy Record (it being full and complete without further amendment). Joseph has come to know God in ways more intimate than those of us who have not, for His sake, been so tempted and tried as Joseph. He has learned the Mind of God by the efficacious working of the Holy Ghost in his heart and mind. He is able to sense the Tutor of His Soul uttering, in a small, still Voice, the perfect interpretation of Pharaoh's dream.

God often sends a double emphasis for those matters that are critical to the execution of His plans and purposes, so Joseph tells Pharaoh: *The dream of Pharaoh is one.* (Gen 41:25)

Joseph does not claim any personal credit for his ability to interpret the dream of Pharaoh just as no minister should boast of the labors that may lead many souls to Christ – it is God and His Holy Spirit that are the active agents thereof. Joseph informs Pharaoh from the outset that it is God who sends and interprets the dreams of Pharaoh: *God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.* (Gen 41:16) After hearing the dream of Pharaoh (both dreams are of the same nature), he interprets the meaning to Pharaoh. No other of his wise men was able to discern the dream.

*26 The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. 27 And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. 28 This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh. 29 Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: 30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land; 31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous. 32 And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.* (Gen 41:26-32) The warnings of God are intended for our good; therefore, when God sends a warning to us, He sends an accompanying solution. The warning was doubled in the dream for emphasis and timeliness of the event about to transpire.

God has placed the remedy and solution to the great famine to follow the seven years of plenty just before the eyes of Pharaoh just as He had placed the Fountain of Water before the blinded eyes of Hagar in the Wilderness. The solution is to be found in the Godly wisdom and administration of Joseph! *33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.* (Gen 41:33) When some emergency arises for which you alone are capable of alleviating, do you not wonder that God has placed you there for “such a time as this?” Through his dream, God made Pharaoh to choose Joseph to be steward of all of Israel, having power and authority second only to Pharaoh. *38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? 39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: 40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.* (Gen 41:38-41)

Do you remember the return of the Prodigal Son? What three things did the Father bestow upon his returning prodigal? A ring, a robe, and shoes are the answer. The ring for authority; the robe as a sign of respect; and shoes for the purpose of freedom of travel. What three things does the Pharaoh give to Joseph?

1. Ring: *42 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand:*
2. Arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;
3. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had. (Gen 41:42-43)

A ring of authority, garments of respect, and a means of freedom of travel were given unto Joseph.

When we come, as the Prodigal, to our Father with a broken and contrite heart; He will reward us with authority, a robe of righteousness to cover our filthy rags of sin; and freedom of living.

Have you received?