

all for good
the story of Joseph in Genesis



Genesis 41

Introduction

- Pharaoh recognized the Spirit of God in Joseph and said there was no one as wise and discerning as Joseph.
- During the seven plentiful years, Joseph gathered up so much grain to store that he couldn't even measure it anymore.
- Joseph married an Egyptian woman and had two sons, whom Joseph named to remind him of God's faithfulness to him.
- When the famine came, as God said it would, Egypt was the only nation to have bread.

Genesis 41:37-45

Pharaoh and Joseph

- Pharaoh put Joseph over his house and all of the people of Egypt, the entire land (verses 40–41). The giving of the ring and robe and riding in the chariot describe a ceremony giving him an official position.
- The signet ring was used to seal official documents, so anyone using it was speaking on behalf of the king (verse 42). The gold chain and linen garments were signs of his new noble position and would have reminded him of when his father gave him a special coat (Genesis 37:3).
- This level of position was very rare for any non-Egyptian in this time period.

Pharaoh and Joseph

- There were several Egyptian noblemen who could have considered themselves “second to Pharaoh” due to their rank, but this ceremony that Pharaoh performed for Joseph set him apart as viceroy.
- All but the king were required to bow to him (verse 43).
- Even though Pharaoh was king, Joseph would be the real decision-maker.
- No one would be allowed to do anything in Egypt without Joseph’s consent (verse 44). Joseph spoke for the king and ruled on the king’s behalf.

Pharaoh and Joseph

- Giving Joseph an Egyptian name was also part of this ceremony and would have made him accepted by the Egyptian court and Egyptian people.
- Giving him an Egyptian wife, especially the daughter of a priest, would have also fully assimilated him into Egypt, aligning him with one of the most powerful priestly families in Egypt.
- However, the biblical text never again mentions Joseph's Egyptian name or his Egyptian wife, because the Bible's focus is on Joseph as God's chosen one.

Pharaoh and Joseph

- Why was Joseph given such high honor by Pharaoh, especially since he was a Hebrew and a slave?
- The text tells us because Pharaoh saw the Spirit of God in him (verse 38).
- He was like no man Pharaoh had ever met, nor did he think he could find another man like him.
- Pharaoh recognized that because Joseph had the Spirit of God in him, there was no one as wise or discerning as he (verse 39).

Pharaoh and Joseph

- In the Old Testament, God's Spirit dwelled in the tabernacle or the temple, in the Holy of Holies, on the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant.
- But the Spirit of God could also fill specific people such as Joshua (Numbers 27:18) or the artisans who built the tabernacle (Exodus 31:3) or come upon people such as Samson (Judges 15:14) or Isaiah (Isa. 61:1) to lead the people, prophesy, or to perform a specific task.
- At Pentecost, God poured out His Spirit upon believers (Acts 2:17). Now, all of those who have been born of the Spirit (John 3:8) are filled with the Holy Spirit – we are all the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

Pharaoh and Joseph

- Every believer has the Spirit of God dwelling within him or her. We can choose to walk by the flesh or walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16–25).
- When we are walking by the Spirit, unbelievers will see God's Spirit in us.
- The Fruit of the Spirit is intentionally called "fruit" because it is not something we can try harder to do.
- The Spirit of God produces fruit. Like on a vine, it is something that grows over time. We must stay connected to the vine (John 15:1–11).

Genesis 41:46-52

Joseph gives God the credit

- Joseph gives his two sons very significant names, which show his faith in God and how he already recognizes that God has brought good out of his hardships. Joseph was 30 years old when he became Pharaoh's viceroy, It had been 13 years of ups and downs for Joseph.
- Though there were ups and downs within that 13 years, he still spent the whole time either as a slave or in prison.
- Now he is in this amazing position of second in command to Pharaoh, with glory and honor and power and wealth and status.

Joseph gives God the credit

- Genesis tells us in how he named his sons, who were born at some point during the first seven years:
 - Manasseh – “forgetting” – “God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father’s house” (verse 51)
 - Ephraim – “twice fruitful” – “God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction” (verse 52)
- Joseph gives his sons Hebrew names because Joseph still remains faithful to God, even while fully assimilated into Egyptian culture.

Joseph gives God the credit

- Joseph gives credit to God for his current situation and for helping him forget his hardship.
- Just as he gave credit to God when he told the cupbearer and the baker that it was God who gave him the interpretations of the dreams (Gen. 40:8). Just as he gave credit to God when he told Pharaoh, “It is not in me; God will give you a favorable answer” (41:16).
- Joseph recognizes that it is God who had made him fruitful in the land of his affliction. God has brought fruitfulness out of his affliction; He has brought good out of his suffering (50:20).

Joseph gives God the credit

- Do you believe that God can turn your pain into blessing and your heartache into joy (Psalm 30:11–12)?
- The apostle Paul writes that God comforts us in our affliction so that we can comfort others in their affliction, with that same comfort we received from God (2 Corinthians 1:3–7).
- God can take the hard things we are going through and use it for our good. Then, we can use it to help someone else.
- The pain you now feel may one day become your ministry to others.

Genesis 41:53-57

God's plan unfolds

- Everything that God said would happen did. His plan unfolded exactly as He said it would.
- The first seven years of plenty happened just as God predicted through the dreams, and then came the seven years of famine, just as God had said through Joseph.
- When the famine hit, Egypt was prepared. Because God had put Joseph in the right place at the right time. Because God had given Pharaoh a dream, but had given the interpretation and the instructions to Joseph.

God's plan unfolds

- Joseph is the one for whom God orchestrated everything to work for good.
- Romans 8:28 is a promise to believers: those who love God and are called according to His purpose. For them all things will work together for good.
- The Bible makes no such promise for unbelievers. Only for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.
- God orchestrated all things for Joseph and his family. But through Joseph and His family, God also blessed many, many others.

Ask Kerby



If the Sabbath is Saturday and we are to “keep the Sabbath,” then why don’t we worship on Saturday?

When did the change take place, and who changed it to Sunday?

Sabbath

- Exodus 20:8 - “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”
- It was the custom of the Jews to come together on the Sabbath, cease work, and worship God.
- Jesus went to the synagogue on Saturday to teach (Matthew 12:9; John 18:20).
- The apostle Paul did the same (Acts 17:2; 18:4)
- So why do we worship on Sunday?

Theological Issue - Continuity

- Of the Ten Commandments listed in Exodus 20:1-17, only nine of them were reinstitute in the New Testament.
- Five are listed in Matthew 19:18 - murder, adultery, stealing, false witness, and honoring parents.
- In Romans 13:9 - coveting and worshiping God properly covers the first and third commandments.
- The one commandment not reaffirmed was the Sabbath. Instead, Jesus said He is the Lord of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8).

Theological Issue - The Law

- The Old Testament system of Law required keeping the Sabbath as part of the Theocracy (moral, legal, sacrificial system).
- The Jewish people were to follow all of the Law in order to follow God.
- But with the sacrificial death of Jesus, we are no longer required to keep the Law. We are under grace not under obligation of the Law.
- It is no longer a requirement that we meet every aspect of the Law, including the provisions of the Sabbath.

Biblical Verses

- Romans 14:5-6 - “One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God.”
- This section addresses Christian liberty. We are given a choice about worship days and what we eat. If seventh day Sabbath were a requirement, then the choice would not be ours, but God’s.

Biblical Verses

- Colossians 2:16-17 - “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”
- A festival is yearly, while a new moon is monthly, and a Sabbath day is weekly. They are referred to as a mere shadow.
- The reality is Jesus, who is our Sabbath.
- Also, the day of His resurrection was designated as “the Lord’s day.”

Biblical Examples

- Acts 20:7 - “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.”
- The disciples were meeting on the first day of the week (Sunday).
- The church meeting involved breaking of bread (communion) and preaching.
- It is also worth noting that Luke did not use the Jewish system of counting day (sundown to sundown) that also delineated the Sabbath.
- He used the Roman system (midnight to midnight).

Biblical Examples

- 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 - “Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.”
- Paul directed the churches to meet on the first day of the week (Sunday) and put money aside as the tithe.
- This was the day (Sunday) when preaching, communion, and an offering took place in the early church.

Biblical Examples

- Revelation 1:10-11 - “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”
- The revelation came on the Lord’s day (Sunday) which was designated as the church’s worship day.
- Summary: Sunday was designated as the day of worship in the New Testament. Saturday was designated as the Sabbath in the Old Testament.