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Genesis 41 – Opportunity Knocks

Introduction

Have you ever had a dream or vision that you felt God had given you? The vision was for something you believed that God wanted to accomplish through you and your ministry. As you planned and moved in the direction you thought you should go, barriers continued to be placed in front of you. In fact, while waiting for that dream to come to fruition, the difficulties that you experienced seemed to make that dream an impossibility. Welcome to Joseph's world! After having been given a dream (Gen. 37), Joseph's path has steadily trended downward. Now, he sits in a prison in Egypt (Gen. 39). Let's see what happens next in his life.

A Problem (Gen. 41:15-21). Even though Joseph was in prison, God was with him (Gen. 39). The warden recognized this reality and placed Joseph in charge of the prisoners. In prison, Joseph met a couple of prisoners who had had troubling dreams (Gen. 40). With God's help, Joseph agreed to interpret their dreams so they could know what they meant (Gen. 40:8 ff.). The Bible explains that the dreams of the other two prisoners came true just as Joseph said they would.

Two years pass (Gen. 41:1). Joseph is still in prison in Egypt. Now, Pharaoh has had two disturbing dreams (Gen. 41:8). Due to the nature of these dreams, Pharaoh desired to have them interpreted but could not find anyone who could tell him what they meant. Word comes to Pharaoh that a prisoner named Joseph can interpret dreams. Pharaoh sends for Joseph so that he can interpret his dreams (Gen. 41:14). Joseph appeared before Pharaoh.

A Plan (Gen. 41:33-36). Pharaoh described his dreams to Joseph. After hearing about Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph explained to him that both of them meant the same thing. Moreover, Joseph stated that "God has revealed to Pharaoh what his about to do" (Gen. 41:25, 28). According to the interpretation, then, God was about to give seven years of abundance to the land of Egypt (Gen. 41:29). Following the seven years of abundance, God would next cause there to be seven years of famine (Gen. 41:30).

What should Pharaoh do? Joseph had a recommendation for how to handle this situation. Pharaoh needed to appoint a wise individual over the land who could help various overseers save food during the seven good years (Gen. 41:35). Then, when the seven years of famine came, there would be food stored up to share with the people. The Bible states that this "proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants" (Gen. 41:37). All that remained was to find the right individual to oversee this project.

A Place (Gen. 41:37-40). The process for filling this open position and locating the right person to oversee this monumental job did not last long. After asking one question, Pharaoh designated Joseph to be the overseer (Gen. 41:40). Pharaoh stated: "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one as discerning and wise as you are. You will be over my house, and all my people will obey your commands" (Gen. 41:39-40). Wow! What a turn of events. Joseph moves from the prison to the palace. According to Pharaoh, Joseph would be the second in command. In fact, only Pharaoh himself would be above him (Gen. 41:40).

Conclusion

The account of Joseph's life at this point is certainly interesting. It teaches believers in today several spiritual truths. One of those is this: just as God was with Joseph through the ups and downs of his journey, He is likewise with us as we walk with Him on a daily basis.