

20. Pharaoh's Dreams

The Word of the Lord: The Old Testament for Young Children

Notes for Parents & Teachers

20. Pharaoh's Dreams

- a. This is a great story! Emphasize that Pharaoh was very troubled about his dreams, and no one could tell him what they meant.
- b. Note that the butler felt guilty about forgetting to talk to Pharaoh about Joseph. (This isn't in the story, but it is a good lesson. Sometimes we forget what we should do, and then later we remember. The butler finally did do what Joseph had asked him to do).
- c. Joseph didn't take credit for telling the dream, he said God would know what it meant.
- d. What a big change for him. One day he was in prison (maybe for many years). The next day he was ruling all the land of Egypt. Emphasize all the great things that Pharaoh gave him. You might add that he also gave him a special wife and they had two children.
- e. It's important to say that Joseph was now so powerful that he could have punished the people who put him in prison, but he forgave them.



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The Lord Tells Joseph About Pharaoh's Dreams

One day Pharaoh, the king, had two dreams and none of his wise men could tell him what they meant. Then the butler, who had been let out of prison, remembered Joseph who was still in the jailhouse and had told him the meaning of his dream. And the butler told Pharaoh about Joseph and how he could tell what dreams meant. Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph out of the prison, and he told Joseph his dreams and asked him what they meant.

Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, “Not me! God shall answer you and bring peace to Pharaoh.” Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream I stood beside the river and I saw seven cows come up from the river. They were fat and beautiful in shape and they ate the grass on the side of the river. And then seven other cows came up after them and they were very thin and evil looking such as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt for badness. The thin bad cows ate up the fat cows and afterwards they were just as thin as before. And then I dreamed another dream, and I saw in my dream seven ears of wheat, full and good to eat. Behold seven ears, shriveled and thin and burnt with the east wind, grew up after them and ate up the seven good ones. I told these dreams to my magicians and no one can tell me what they mean.”

And Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The seven good cows are seven good years and the evil cows that came afterwards are seven bad years, and the seven good ears of wheat are seven years of plenty and the seven ears of wheat, thin and burned with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine.”

Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The meaning of both dreams is the same. The Lord will bless you and your people with seven years of plenty to eat in the land of Egypt and then there will be seven years of nothing to eat and the people will starve. Now look for a man who is wise and put him in charge of all the land of Egypt and give him officers to help him. And in the seven years of plenty of food, let them gather all the food and save all the extra grain and keep food in the cities and store them up in storehouses for when the seven bad years come.

And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “God has shown you all these things. There is no one as wise or clever as you are.” And Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over all his lands and he put his ring on Joseph's hand and dressed him in fine clothes and put a gold necklace around his neck, so all the people would know that Joseph was second in command after Pharaoh.

Genesis 41

