

## **STUDY – GENESIS 41:41-57**

Initial Reflection: Read Genesis 41:41-57

- What stands out for you?
  - Is there anything you don't understand?
  - Look out – in particular – for repeated themes, words & phrases, and much irony in the context of the broader Joseph narrative.
1. Discuss / reflect on whether (or not) you find it easier to acknowledge and remain faithful to God in the really good times.  
Have you ever been put in a position of great power / responsibility / authority? How did (or didn't) you remain humble, and faithful to God?

2. Joseph's new name (given to him by Pharaoh) translates as along the lines of "God speaks and lives" or "my provision is God, the living God."  
What is striking about this?

*Pharaoh gives this to Joseph, seemingly (again) acknowledging God: that He is the living God who speaks and provides. Pharaoh, the god-like king of Egypt who has encountered this God (the only God) - whether he realises it or not – continues in this acknowledgment of God, as he continues his "Egyptianization" of Joseph.*

*God continues to be in control over the great Pharaoh, king of Egypt: even in what seem like minor, insignificant details!*

3. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How does Jesus' temptation (in particular, that detailed in verses 8 and 9) help us as we reflect on the way Joseph responded to the temptation of succumbing to the great power bestowed on him by Pharaoh?

*Joseph was given great power, and all that went along with it: status, authority, external adornment, responsibility. Yet we read that he continues to get about Egypt and put in place the plan he laid out to ensure people are saved during the great famine.*

*Similarly (but spectacularly better) is the way Jesus faithfully responds to being tempted by satan with power and authority ("all this I will give you."). He doesn't give in to the temptation, and instead faithfully responds by proclaiming Scripture which He then ensures He follows.*

*And so can we, when we're tempted.*

4. What's striking about verse 49 (in the context of both 41:29, and what's to follow as the famine takes hold (verse 55)).  
As we think of ourselves and our relationship with God, what does this remind us of, and point us to?

*Two things: this is fulfilling exactly what God said would happen, when He revealed this to Pharaoh (and to Joseph) in his dream.*

*Secondly, it shows just how severe the famine was. The severity of the famine exceeded the seven years of abundance which were so plentiful that it became pointless to record the measure of the abundant harvests!)*

*Allegorically: as we look to Jesus and His rescue of us, the severity of the famine and the hopelessness of people in Egypt and beyond without the rescue of the Egyptian grain-stores, remind us just how severe our plight is without the rescue of God through His Son Jesus! (Ref. Eph. 2:1-3; 4:18-19; Romans 1:21-23; 3:10-18).*

5. As chapter 41 closes, we're told that people from all over the world come to Egypt for salvation from otherwise starvation and death.

Read the following passages and discuss / reflect on how they point us to God's grace to His whole world:

Matthew 5:45

1 Timothy 2:4

2 Peter 3:9

John 3:16

*The reading in Matthew shows us God's grace by blessing all people in the physical (natural) realm, even those who don't follow or trust Him.*

*The other readings show us God's grace in desiring that all people come to Him in repentance, to know the truth only found in the work of the Lord Jesus, to accept His salvation, and receive the benefits of this salvation: not perishing, but being rescued to life eternal with Him!*

6. How does verses 55 and 57 fulfil God's covenant promises to Abraham recorded in Genesis 12:1-3?

*Firstly, it's through these events, that God makes the family of Israel into the great nation as Joseph's family will be among those from 'the world' to come to Egypt to buy grain.*

*Secondly, Pharaoh acknowledges that it's through God's servant Joseph that the Egyptian people will be blessed: fed, saved from the famine.*

*And this then extends beyond Egypt to people from 'all the world,' as all peoples on earth are blessed through Joseph.*

7. As we close this preaching series, discuss / reflect on what stands out to you. What have you learnt about God? What have you learnt about yourself? How will you respond to what you've learned?