

SERMON-BASED STUDY: RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT GOD

Genesis 41:1-32, ESV – After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, ² and behold, there came up out of the Nile seven cows, attractive and plump, and they fed in the reed grass. ³ And behold, seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. ⁴ And the ugly, thin cows ate up the seven attractive, plump cows. And Pharaoh awoke. ⁵ And he fell asleep and dreamed a second time. And behold, seven ears of grain, plump and good, were growing on one stalk. ⁶ And behold, after them sprouted seven ears, thin and blighted by the east wind. ⁷ And the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump, full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream. ⁸ So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

⁹ Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “I remember my offenses today. ¹⁰ When Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, ¹¹ we dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own interpretation. ¹² A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream. ¹³ And as he interpreted to us, so it came about. I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged.”

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. ¹⁵ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” ¹⁶ Joseph answered Pharaoh, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.” ¹⁷ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Behold, in my dream I was standing on the banks of the Nile. ¹⁸ Seven cows, plump and attractive, came up out of the Nile and fed in the reed grass. ¹⁹ Seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and thin, such as I had never seen in all the land of Egypt. ²⁰ And the thin, ugly cows ate up the first seven plump cows, ²¹ but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were still as ugly as at the beginning. Then I awoke. ²² I also saw in my dream seven ears growing on one stalk, full and good. ²³ Seven ears, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprouted after them, ²⁴ and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. And I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me.”

²⁵ Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. ²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. ²⁷ The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. ²⁸ It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. ²⁹ There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, ³⁰ but after them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume the land, ³¹ and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. ³² And the doubling of Pharaoh’s dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about.

Notes:

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QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

ENGAGE WITH THE MESSAGE

- 1 Why do you think Joseph gave God credit for interpreting dreams, especially in front of Pharaoh?
- 2 What does this story show us about God's sovereignty and timing?
- 3 How do you think Joseph's time in prison prepared him for leadership? How can you be faithful in "small" or "hidden" seasons, like Joseph was in prison?

DIGGING DEEPER

- A **2 Peter 3:8-9, ESV** – ⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
- 4 What does this passage teach about God's timing in fulfilling His promises?
- 5 How does knowing that God is patient with us change your perspective about "unanswered" prayers?
- 6 How does this principle comfort you? How does it challenge you?

B **Psalm 27:13-14, ESV** – ¹³ *I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!*
¹⁴ *Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!*

Psalm 37:7, ESV – ⁷ *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!*

Psalm 130:5-6, ESV – ⁵ *I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;* ⁶ *my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.*

7 Looking at the passages above, what does it mean to wait for the Lord? How does the imagery of a watchman waiting for the morning illustrate our soul waiting on the Lord?

8 How can we learn to recognize *the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living*?

9 What steps can you take to cultivate a spirit of stillness and patience when facing challenges and setbacks?

TAKING IT HOME

This week, we learned that God’s timing is always perfect. We also saw how God prepares people for His future plans during the waiting. How have you seen God’s perfect timing in your life? How are you doing with waiting for the Lord?

PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUEST

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FOR FURTHER STUDY

Psalm 33:20-22; 62:5

Habakkuk 2:3

Micah 7:7