

# A Study in Genesis: Joseph and God's Enabling Grace

**Scripture Focus:** Genesis 40 & 41

Once Joseph is in jail, he is again given a position of responsibility when the chief jailer, *"committed to Joseph's care all the prisoners who were in the prison..."* (Gen. 39:22) This was evidence of Yahweh never forsaking Joseph. *The LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love....* (v. 21a) During this time in prison, Joseph was given the opportunity to interpret the dreams of two prisoners (Gen. 40:7-19). One prisoner, the cupbearer, was then released from prison. Joseph asked that he be remembered favorably to Pharaoh, but he was forgotten. (20-23)

Because of God's grace, Joseph is eventually remembered when Pharaoh needed his dream interpreted and the cupbearer told Pharaoh about Joseph and his gift. (Gen. 41:9-14) Joseph was released from the dungeon and successfully interpreted Pharaoh's dream, giving God the credit as he should! (41:16)

The dream interpreted by Joseph, as God enabled, foretells seven years of prosperity and then seven years of famine. Beginning in verse 33, Joseph moves from the interpretation of the dream to a plan for dealing with the impending crisis. In the proposal Joseph shares, Pharaoh sees Joseph as one, *...in whom is the spirit of God.* (41:38b) This is an extraordinary confession of faith for a figure whom Egyptian tradition considered as deity himself. But there was obviously something very special about Joseph. God's spirit was indeed within him.

Scripture records that, *Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt.* (41:46a) The interpretation of the dream was accurate with, *...the thing fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about (v. 32b).* And so it happened, seven years of prosperity and then seven years of severe famine. Due to God graciously enabling Joseph to not only know what was coming but to make a plan and administer it, *...all the world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine became severe throughout the world.* (v. 57)

Please do not miss God's enabling grace in this story. And in YOURS!