

A dirt road winds through a dense forest. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a path of light on the road. The text "JOSEPH" is overlaid in large white letters, and "Trailblazer for God" is overlaid in a smaller, italicized font below it.

# JOSEPH

*Trailblazer for God*

# **Joseph the Ruler**

**Genesis 41:1-57**

## Genesis 41:1-57

When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: he was standing by the Nile, <sup>2</sup> when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. <sup>3</sup> After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the river-bank. <sup>4</sup> And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

<sup>5</sup> He fell asleep again and had a second dream: seven ears of corn, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. <sup>6</sup> After them, seven other ears of corn sprouted – thin and scorched by the east wind. <sup>7</sup> The thin ears of corn swallowed up the seven healthy, full ears. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

<sup>8</sup> In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

<sup>9</sup> Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, 'Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. <sup>10</sup> Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. <sup>11</sup> Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. <sup>12</sup> Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. <sup>13</sup> And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was impaled.'

<sup>14</sup> So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

<sup>15</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.'

<sup>16</sup> 'I cannot do it,' Joseph replied to Pharaoh, 'but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.' ...

# Dreams

- Dreams were important in Joseph's life
- We too have dreams, but mostly forgotten

## Joseph and dreams

- Joseph the Dreamer (Gen 37) and interpreter (40 & 41)
- Pharaoh's dreams jogged the Cupbearer's memory (41:9-13)
- With God's help (41:16) Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream



## Joseph rewarded

- Joseph risked suggesting a way forward (vv33-36)
- Pharoah recognised his talent and God's Spirit (vv37-40)
- Vv41-57 describe Joseph's life as Egyptian ruler

## Odds and God

- More odds against Joseph
  - Foreigner, a Hebrew (v12), despised by Egyptians
  - Prisoner, with no voice
- “But God...!”

By God's grace, Joseph remained faithful and  
was used by God to change history

Key characteristics in favour of Joseph

# Godliness

- Gave credit to God (v16, 25, 28); faithful to God (vv38-39)
- God was the constant building block in his life
- Challenge: Ensure faith in God is your foundation

# Boldness

- He balanced humility with boldness (v33-37)
- The dreams originated with God and required action
- Challenge: Balance humility (sensitivity) with boldness

# Skills

- Pharaoh recognised Joseph's skills and abilities
- Joseph had vision, ability to execute a plan (vv53-57)
- Challenge: Use & develop your gifts/skills in God's service

# Wisdom

- Joseph's Egyptian life required great wisdom (vv44-45,50-52)
- Amidst Egyptian beliefs, Joseph remained faithful to Yahweh
- Challenge: Living in our modern world requires wisdom

## God and dreams

- Dreams/visions won't add anything new to God's revelation
- Don't try to interpret every dream
- If from God, it will be in line with Scripture
- ALWAYS refer to the Bible – there will be no contradiction
- Exercise great care – consult the Bible, Church, wise counsel



## The final challenge

*Will God find me faithful to use me when needed?*

*Am I available for God to use me for writing his story?*

*Do I have Godliness, Boldness, Skills and Wisdom?*