

chapter 39

Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

1 Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. An Egyptian named Potiphar had bought him from the Ishmaelite traders who had taken him there. Potiphar was one of Pharaoh's officials. He was the captain of the palace guard. **2** The Lord was with Joseph. He gave him great success. Joseph lived in Potiphar's house. **3** Joseph's master saw that the Lord was with him. He saw that the Lord gave Joseph success in everything he did. **4** So Potiphar was pleased with Joseph. He made him his attendant. He put Joseph in charge of his house. He told Joseph to take good care of everything he owned. **5** From that time on, the Lord blessed Potiphar's family and servants because of Joseph. He blessed everything Potiphar had in his house and field. **6** So Potiphar told Joseph to take good care of everything he owned. With Joseph in charge, he didn't have to worry about anything except the food he ate. Joseph was strong and handsome. **7** After a while, his master's wife noticed Joseph. She said to him, "Make love to me!" **8** But he said no. "My master has put me in charge," he told her. "Now he doesn't have to worry about anything in the house. He trusts me to take care of everything he owns. **9** "No one in this house is in a higher position than I am. My master hasn't held anything back from me, except you. You are his wife. So how could I do an evil thing like that? How could I sin against God?" **10** She spoke to Joseph day after day. But he told her he wouldn't make love to her. He didn't even want to be with her. **11** One day Joseph went into the house to take care of his duties. None of the family servants was inside. **12** Potiphar's wife grabbed hold of him by his coat. "Make love to me!" she said. But he left his coat in her hand. And he ran out of the house. **13** She saw that he had left his coat in her hand and had run out of the house. **14** So she called her servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew slave has been brought here to make fun of us! He came in here to force me to have sex with him. But I screamed for help. **15** He heard my scream. So he left his coat beside me and ran out of the house." **16** She kept Joseph's coat with her until Potiphar came home. **17** Then she told him her story. She said, "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to rape me. **18** But I screamed for help. So he left his coat beside me and ran out of the house." **19** Potiphar's wife told him, "That's how your slave treated me." When Joseph's master heard her story, he became very angry. **20** So he put Joseph in prison. It was the place where the king's prisoners were kept. While Joseph was there in the prison, **21** the Lord was with him. He was kind to him. So the man who was running the prison was pleased with Joseph. **22** He put Joseph in charge of all of the prisoners. He made him accountable for everything that was done there. **23** The man who ran the prison didn't pay attention to anything that was in Joseph's care. The Lord was with Joseph. He gave Joseph success in everything he did.

chapter 40

The Wine Taster and the Baker

1 Some time later, the Egyptian king's baker and wine taster did something their master didn't like. **2** So Pharaoh became angry with his two officials, the chief wine taster and the chief baker. **3** He put them in prison in the house of the captain of the palace guard. It was the same prison where Joseph was kept. **4** The captain put Joseph in charge of those men. So Joseph took care of them. Some time passed while they were in prison. **5** Then each of the two men had a dream. The men were the Egyptian king's baker and wine taster. They were being held in prison. Both of them had dreams the same night. Each of their dreams had its own meaning. **6** Joseph came to them the next morning. He saw that they were sad. **7** They were Pharaoh's officials, and they were in prison with Joseph in his master's house. So he asked them, "Why do you look so sad today?" **8** "We both had dreams," they answered. "But no one can tell us what they mean." Then Joseph said to them, "Only God knows what dreams mean. Tell me your dreams." **9** So the chief wine taster told Joseph his dream. He said to him, "In my dream I saw a vine in front of me. **10** There were three branches on the vine. As soon as it budded, it flowered. And bunches of ripe grapes grew on it. **11** "Pharaoh's cup was in my hand. I took the grapes. I squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup. Then I put the cup in his hand." **12** "Here's what your dream means," Joseph said to him. "The three branches are three days. **13** In three days Pharaoh will let you out of prison. He'll give your position back to you. And you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand. That's what you used to do when you were his wine taster. **14** "But when everything is going well with

you, remember me. Do me a favor. Speak to Pharaoh about me. Get me out of this prison. [15](#) I was taken away from the land of the Hebrews by force. Even here I haven't done anything to be put in prison for.” [16](#) The chief baker saw that Joseph had given a positive meaning to the wine taster's dream. So he said to Joseph, “I had a dream too. There were three baskets of bread on my head. [17](#) All kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh were in the top basket. But the birds were eating them out of the basket that was on my head.” [18](#) “Here's what your dream means,” Joseph said. “The three baskets are three days. [19](#) In three days Pharaoh will cut your head off. Then he will stick a pole through your body and set the pole up. The birds will eat up your body.” [20](#) The third day was Pharaoh's birthday. He had a big dinner prepared for all of his officials. He brought the chief wine taster and the chief baker out of prison. He did it in front of his officials. [21](#) He gave the chief wine taster's position back to him. Once again the wine taster put the cup into Pharaoh's hand. [22](#) But Pharaoh had a pole stuck through the chief baker's body. Then he had the pole set up. Everything happened exactly as Joseph had told them when he explained their dreams. [23](#) But the chief wine taster didn't remember Joseph. In fact, he forgot all about him.

chapter 41

Pharaoh Has Two Dreams

[1](#) When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream. In his dream, he was standing by the Nile River. [2](#) Seven cows came up out of the river. They looked healthy and fat. They were eating some of the tall grass that was growing along the river. [3](#) After them, seven other cows came up out of the Nile. They looked ugly and skinny. They were standing beside the other cows on the riverbank. [4](#) The ugly, skinny cows ate up the seven cows that looked healthy and fat. Then Pharaoh woke up. [5](#) He fell asleep again and had a second dream. In that dream, seven heads of grain were growing on one stem. They were healthy and good. [6](#) After them, seven other heads of grain came up. They were thin and dried up by the east wind. [7](#) The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up. It had been a dream. [8](#) In the morning he was worried. So he sent for all of the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams. But no one could tell him what they meant. [9](#) Then the chief wine taster spoke up. He said to Pharaoh, “Now I remember that I've done something wrong. [10](#) Pharaoh was once angry with his servants. He put me and the chief baker in prison. We were in the house of the captain of the palace guard. [11](#) Each of us had a dream the same night. Each dream had its own meaning. [12](#) “A young Hebrew servant was there with us. He was a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams. And he explained them to us. He told each of us the meaning of our dreams. [13](#) Things turned out exactly as he said they would. I was given back my position. The other man had a pole stuck through his body.” [14](#) So Pharaoh sent for Joseph. He was quickly brought out of the prison. Joseph shaved himself and changed his clothes. Then he came to Pharaoh. [15](#) Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream. No one can tell me what it means. But I've heard that when you hear a dream you can explain it.” [16](#) “I can't do it,” Joseph replied to Pharaoh. “But God will give Pharaoh the answer he wants.” [17](#) Then Pharaoh told Joseph what he had dreamed. He said, “I was standing on the bank of the Nile River. [18](#) Seven cows came up out of the river. They were fat and good-looking. They were eating the tall grass that was growing along the river. [19](#) “After them, seven other cows came up. They were bony and very ugly and thin. I had never seen such ugly cows in the whole land of Egypt. [20](#) “The thin, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first. [21](#) But even after the thin cows ate up the fat ones, no one could tell that they had eaten them. They looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up. [22](#) “In my dreams I also saw seven heads of grain. They were full and good. They were all growing on one stem. [23](#) “After them, seven other heads of grain came up. They were weak and thin and dried up by the east wind. [24](#) “The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads. I told my dreams to the magicians. But none of them could explain them to me.” [25](#) Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Both of Pharaoh's dreams have the same meaning. God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. [26](#) The seven good cows are seven years. And the seven good heads of grain are seven years. Both dreams mean the same thing. [27](#) “The seven thin, ugly cows that came up later are seven years. So are the seven worthless heads of grain that were dried up by the east wind. They are seven years when there won't be enough food. [28](#) “It's exactly as I said to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what he's about to do. [29](#) Seven years with plenty of food are coming to the whole land of Egypt. [30](#) “But seven years when there won't be enough food will follow them. Then everyone will forget about all of the food Egypt had. Terrible hunger will

destroy the land. [31](#) There won't be anything left to remind people of the years when there was plenty of food in the land. That's how bad the hunger that follows will be. [32](#) “God gave the dream to Pharaoh in two forms. That's because the matter has been firmly decided by God. And it's because God will do it soon. [33](#) “So Pharaoh should look for a wise and understanding man. He should put him in charge of the land of Egypt. [34](#) “Pharaoh should appoint officials to be in charge of the land. They should take a fifth of the harvest in Egypt during the seven years when there's plenty of food. [35](#) They should collect all of the extra food of the good years that are coming. Pharaoh should give them authority to store up the grain. They should keep it in the cities for food. [36](#) “The grain should be stored up for the country to use later. It will be needed during the seven years when there isn't enough food in Egypt. Then the country won't be destroyed just because it doesn't have enough food.” [37](#) The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and all of his officials. [38](#) So Pharaoh said to them, “The spirit of God is in this man. We can't find anyone else like him, can we?” [39](#) Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “God has made all of this known to you. No one is as wise and understanding as you are. [40](#) You will be in charge of my palace. All of my people must obey your orders. I will be greater than you only because I'm the one who sits on the throne.”