

Saturday, January 19

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Genesis 39:1 - 41:16

39 **1** When Joseph was taken to Egypt by the Ishmaelite traders, he was purchased by Potiphar, an Egyptian officer. Potiphar was captain of the guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. **2** The LORD was with Joseph, so he succeeded in everything he did as he served in the home of his Egyptian master. **3** Potiphar noticed this and realized that the LORD was with Joseph, giving him success in everything he did. **4** This pleased Potiphar, so he soon made Joseph his personal attendant. He put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned. **5** From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the LORD began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished. **6** So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat! Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, **7** and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded. **8** But Joseph refused. "Look," he told her, "my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. **9** No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God." **10** She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after day, but he refused to sleep with her, and he kept out of her way as much as possible. **11** One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work. **12** She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "Come on, sleep with me!" Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house. **13** When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled, **14** she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. "My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! He came into my room to rape me, but I screamed. **15** When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me." **16** She kept the cloak with her until her husband came home. **17** Then she told him her story. "That Hebrew slave you've brought into our house tried to come in and fool around with me," she said. **18** "But when I screamed, he ran outside, leaving his cloak with me!" **19** Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her. **20** So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained. **21** But the LORD was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the LORD made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. **22** Before long, the

warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. **23** The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The LORD was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.

40 **1** Some time later, Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer and chief baker offended their royal master. **2** Pharaoh became angry with these two officials, **3** and he put them in the prison where Joseph was, in the palace of the captain of the guard. **4** They remained in prison for quite some time, and the captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, who looked after them. **5** While they were in prison, Pharaoh's cup-bearer and baker each had a dream one night, and each dream had its own meaning. **6** When Joseph saw them the next morning, he noticed that they both looked upset. **7** "Why do you look so worried today?" he asked them. **8** And they replied, "We both had dreams last night, but no one can tell us what they mean." "Interpreting dreams is God's business," Joseph replied. "Go ahead and tell me your dreams." **9** So the chief cup-bearer told Joseph his dream first. "In my dream," he said, "I saw a grapevine in front of me. **10** The vine had three branches that began to bud and blossom, and soon it produced clusters of ripe grapes. **11** I was holding Pharaoh's wine cup in my hand, so I took a cluster of grapes and squeezed the juice into the cup. Then I placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand." **12** "This is what the dream means," Joseph said. "The three branches represent three days. **13** Within three days Pharaoh will lift you up and restore you to your position as his chief cup-bearer. **14** And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. **15** For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it." **16** When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given the first dream such a positive interpretation, he said to Joseph, "I had a dream, too. In my dream there were three baskets of white pastries stacked on my head. **17** The top basket contained all kinds of pastries for Pharaoh, but the birds came and ate them from the basket on my head." **18** "This is what the dream means," Joseph told him. "The three baskets also represent three days. **19** Three days from now Pharaoh will lift you up and impale your body on a pole. Then birds will come and peck away at your flesh." **20** Pharaoh's birthday came three days later, and he prepared a banquet for all his officials and staff. He summoned his chief cup-bearer and chief baker to join the other officials. **21** He then restored the chief cup-bearer to his former position, so he could again hand Pharaoh his cup. **22** But Pharaoh impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had predicted when he interpreted his dream. **23** Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought.

41 **1** Two full years later, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing on the bank of the Nile River. **2** In his dream he saw seven fat, healthy cows come up out of the river and begin grazing in the marsh grass. **3** Then he saw seven more cows come up behind them from the Nile, but these were scrawny and thin. These cows stood beside the fat cows on the riverbank. **4** Then the scrawny, thin cows ate the seven healthy, fat cows! At this point in the dream, Pharaoh woke up. **5** But he fell asleep again and had a second dream. This time he saw seven heads of grain, plump and beautiful, growing on a single stalk. **6** Then seven more heads of grain appeared, but these were shriveled and withered by the east wind. **7** And these thin heads swallowed up the seven plump, well-formed heads! Then Pharaoh woke up again and realized it was a dream. **8** The next morning Pharaoh was very disturbed by the dreams. So he called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. When Pharaoh told them his dreams, not one of them could tell him what they meant. **9** Finally, the king's chief cup-bearer spoke up. "Today I have been reminded of my failure," he told Pharaoh. **10** "Some time ago, you were angry with the chief baker and me, and you imprisoned us in the palace of the captain of the guard. **11** One night the chief baker and I each had a dream, and each dream had its own meaning. **12** There was a young Hebrew man with us in the prison who was a slave of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he told us what each of our dreams meant. **13** And everything happened just as he had predicted. I was restored to my position as cup-bearer, and the chief baker was executed and impaled on a pole." **14** Pharaoh sent for Joseph at once, and he was quickly brought from the prison. After he shaved and changed his clothes, he went in and stood before Pharaoh. **15** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream last night, and no one here can tell me what it means. But I have heard that when you hear about a dream you can interpret it." **16** "It is beyond my power to do this," Joseph replied. "But God can tell you what it means and set you at ease."

Matthew 12:46 - 13:23

12 **46** As Jesus was speaking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. **47** Someone told Jesus, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak to you." **48** Jesus asked, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" **49** Then he pointed to his disciples and said, "Look, these are my mother and brothers. **50** Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!"

13 **1** Later that same day Jesus left the house and sat beside the lake. **2** A large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat there and taught as the people stood

on the shore. **3** He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. **4** As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. **5** Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. **6** But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn’t have deep roots, they died. **7** Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. **8** Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! **9** Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.” **10** His disciples came and asked him, “Why do you use parables when you talk to the people?” **11** He replied, “You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but others are not. **12** To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them. **13** That is why I use these parables, For they look, but they don’t really see. They hear, but they don’t really listen or understand. **14** This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that says, ‘When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend. **15** For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes— so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.’ **16** “But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. **17** I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but they didn’t see it. And they longed to hear what you hear, but they didn’t hear it. **18** “Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds: **19** The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. **20** The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. **21** But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word. **22** The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God’s word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced. **23** The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!”

Psalms 17:1 - 15

17 1 O LORD, hear my plea for justice. Listen to my cry for help. Pay attention to my prayer, for it comes from honest lips. **2** Declare me innocent, for you see those who do right. **3** You have

tested my thoughts and examined my heart in the night. You have scrutinized me and found nothing wrong. I am determined not to sin in what I say. **4** I have followed your commands, which keep me from following cruel and evil people. **5** My steps have stayed on your path; I have not wavered from following you. **6** I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God. Bend down and listen as I pray. **7** Show me your unfailing love in wonderful ways. By your mighty power you rescue those who seek refuge from their enemies. **8** Guard me as you would guard your own eyes. Hide me in the shadow of your wings. **9** Protect me from wicked people who attack me, from murderous enemies who surround me. **10** They are without pity. Listen to their boasting! **11** They track me down and surround me, watching for the chance to throw me to the ground. **12** They are like hungry lions, eager to tear me apart— like young lions hiding in ambush. **13** Arise, O LORD ! Stand against them, and bring them to their knees! Rescue me from the wicked with your sword! **14** By the power of your hand, O LORD, destroy those who look to this world for their reward. But satisfy the hunger of your treasured ones. May their children have plenty, leaving an inheritance for their descendants. **15** Because I am righteous, I will see you. When I awake, I will see you face to face and be satisfied.

Proverbs 3:33 - 35

3 33 The LORD curses the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the upright. **34** The LORD mocks the mockers but is gracious to the humble. **35** The wise inherit honor, but fools are put to shame!