

Week#: 26	Text: Genesis 41:1 – 57	Title: Joseph Is Exalted
Songs:	They That Wait Upon The Lord (Is 40:31)	
	(Possible: Everlasting God (Chris Tomlin))	
	I Trust In You (Lauren Daigle)	
	You Are Lord of Heaven (Community Worship)	

“TRUSTING GOD” BIBLE STUDY
Lesson Four JOSEPH IS EXALTED

HOW DOES GOD STRENGTHEN YOUR HEART?

After the cupbearer was restored back to his office, Joseph waited another two full years in prison. Wow! I know how it feels to wait on God for something for a long time. It is probably one of the hardest things you will ever have to go through. But you can do it because the Bible says in Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” Christ gives you the strength to do anything He has called you to do.

Psalms 27:14 says, “Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, wait on the LORD.” You know something is important when it is repeated twice. Psalms 27:14 says twice to wait on the Lord, but with that commandment, comes a promise from God. To strengthen any muscle, you have to use it more. When God sets out to strengthen your heart, waiting on Him is often how he accomplishes it.

Dictionary.com says that a **patient person** is: “bearing provocation, annoyance, misfortune, delay, hardship, pain, etc., with fortitude and calm and without complaint, anger, or the like.” This certainly describes Joseph. By this time in Joseph’s life, he has been betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, resisted temptation, and spent about ten years or so in prison.

If you have ever farmed, you are very familiar with patience. Crops (fruit) sometimes take a long time to mature. **James 5:7 says, “Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.” The same is true of the fruit that you bear. Let God be the farmer (vine dresser) as He plants, prunes, waters, and fertilizes, all in His perfect timing.**

Jesus told a parable about a farmer who sowed seed in a field. In Luke 8:8, 15 Jesus says, “And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold...As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, **hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.**”

Isaiah 40:30-31 “Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ³¹but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” This, too, is a promise from God and one that can be declared daily over your life. Have you ever watched a young child with their boundless energy? I often wish I had that kind of energy. Verse 31 says you can renew your strength, mount up like eagles, run and not be weary and walk without fainting if you learn to wait on the Lord. Wow! What a promise!

Genesis 41:1-8 “At the end of two years, Pharaoh had a dream: he was standing beside the Nile River; ²and there came up out of the river seven cows, sleek and fat; and they began feeding in swamp grass. ³After them, there came up out of the river seven more cows, miserable-looking and lean; and they stood by the other cows at the edge of the river. ⁴Then the miserable-looking and lean cows ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. At this point Pharaoh woke up. ⁵But he went to sleep again

and dreamt a second time: seven full, ripe ears of grain grew out of a single stalk.⁶ After them, seven ears, thin and blasted by the east wind, sprang up.⁷ And the thin ears swallowed up the seven full, ripe ears. Then Pharaoh woke up and realized it had been a dream.

⁸ In the morning he found himself so upset that he summoned all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one there could interpret them for him.”

Pharaoh was troubled because the two dreams he had dreamed. He knew that they meant something significant, but, just what he did not know. Pharaoh had always depended on his wise men to interpret dreams, but not one of them could interpret these dreams. God, however, had sent Joseph to Egypt “for such a time as this.” In the book of Esther, Mordecai, Queen Esther’s uncle, asked her, “And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” When God is directing your footsteps, He will navigate your “for such a time as this” moments. You just have to follow His lead and stay sensitive to His voice.

Genesis 41:9-24 “Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “Today reminds me of something wherein I am at fault:¹⁰ Pharaoh was angry with his officials and put me in the prison of the house of the captain of the guard, me and the chief baker.¹¹ One night both I and he had dreams, and each man’s dream had its own meaning.¹² There was with us a young man, a Hebrew, a servant of the captain of the guard; and we told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us — he interpreted each man’s dream individually.¹³ And it came about as he interpreted to us — I was restored to my office, and he was hanged.”

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh summoned Yosef (Joseph), and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon. He shaved himself, changed his clothes, and came in to Pharaoh.

¹⁵ Pharaoh said to Yosef (Joseph), “I had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it; but I’ve heard it said about you that when you hear a dream, you can interpret it.”¹⁶ Yosef (Joseph) answered Pharaoh, “It isn’t in me. God will give Pharaoh an answer that will set his mind at peace.”¹⁷ Pharaoh said to Yosef (Joseph), “In my dream, I stood at the edge of the river;¹⁸ and there came up out of the river seven cows, fat and sleek; and they began feeding in the swamp grass.¹⁹ After them, there came up out of the river seven more cows, poor, miserable-looking and lean — I’ve never seen such bad-looking cows in all the land of Egypt!²⁰ Then the lean and miserable-looking cows ate up the first seven fat cows.²¹ But after they had eaten them up, one couldn’t tell that they had eaten them; because they were as miserable-looking as before. At this point I woke up.²² But I dreamed again and saw seven full, ripe ears of grain growing out of a single stalk.²³ After them, seven ears, thin and blasted by the east wind, sprang up.²⁴ And the thin ears swallowed up the seven ripe ears. I told this to the magicians, but none of them could explain it to me.”

Joseph’s greatest trial began with two dreams and would end with two dreams. It is called “inclusio” when something starts and concludes with the same thing. According to [Wikipedia](#), “In biblical studies, inclusio is a literary device based on a concentric principle, also known as bracketing or an envelope structure, which consists of creating a frame by placing similar material at the beginning and end of a section, although whether this material should consist of a word or a phrase, or whether greater amounts of text also qualify, and of what length the frames section should be, are matters of some debate. “Inclusio” is found in various sources, both antique and new. The purpose of an “inclusio” may be structural - to alert the reader to a particularly important theme - or it may serve to show how the material within the inclusio relates to the inclusio itself.” It may also serve to say that everything between the two is all inclusive (i.e. “everything from A to Z”). God uses “inclusio” quite a few times in the Bible.

Genesis 41:25-32 "Yosef (Joseph) said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are the same: God has told Pharaoh what he is about to do.²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears of grain are seven years — the dreams are the same.²⁷ Likewise the seven lean and miserable-looking cows that came up after them are seven years, and also the seven empty ears blasted by the east wind — there will be seven years of famine.²⁸ This is what I told Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do.²⁹ Here it is: there will be seven years of abundance throughout the whole land of Egypt;³⁰ but afterwards, there will come seven years of famine; and Egypt will forget all the abundance. The famine will consume the land,³¹ and the abundance will not be known in the land because of the famine that will follow, because it will be truly terrible.³² Why was the dream doubled for Pharaoh? Because the matter has been fixed by God, and God will shortly cause it to happen."

"Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do." **When someone dreams something similar twice they reveal something God is going to accomplish. Nothing man does will change the outcome.**

JOSEPH SHOWED HIS GIFT FROM GOD

Genesis 41:33-36 ""Therefore, Pharaoh should look for a man both discreet and wise to put in charge of the land of Egypt.³⁴ Pharaoh should do this, and he should appoint supervisors over the land to receive a twenty percent tax on the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance.³⁵ They should gather all the food produced during these good years coming up and set aside grain under the supervision of Pharaoh to be used for food in the cities, and they should store it.³⁶ This will be the land's food supply for the seven years of famine that will come over the land of Egypt, so that the land will not perish as a result of the famine.""

Daniel 2:20-23 says, "Blessed be the name of God from eternity past to eternity future! For wisdom and power are his alone;²¹ he brings the changes of seasons and times; he installs and deposes kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and know ledge to those with discernment.²² He reveals deep and secret things; he knows what lies in the darkness; and light dwells with him.²³ I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors, for giving me wisdom and power, and revealing to me what we wanted from you, for giving us the answer for the king." Joseph not only could help interpret the Pharaoh's dreams, but he also had a plan on what needed to be done. Joseph had the gift of "administration" and "leadership" and now God was about to put it to use for His glory. God is now moving Joseph from "disappointment" to Joseph's "next appointment". When God moves, He moves quickly and we have to move quickly, also.

GOD'S RESTORATION IS ALWAYS COMPLETE

Genesis 41:37-45 "The proposal seemed good both to Pharaoh and to all his officials.³⁸ Pharaoh said to his officials, "Can we find anyone else like him? The Spirit of God lives in him!"

³⁹ So Pharaoh said to Yosef (Joseph), "Since God has shown you all this — there is no one as discerning and wise as you — ⁴⁰ you will be in charge of my household; all my people will be ruled by what you say. Only when I rule from my throne will I be greater than you."⁴¹ Pharaoh said to Yosef (Joseph), "Here, I place you in charge of the whole land of Egypt."⁴² Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Yosef's (Joseph's) hand, had him clothed in fine linen with a gold chain around his neck ⁴³ and had him ride in his second best chariot; and they cried before him, "Bow down!" Thus he placed him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.⁴⁴ Pharaoh said to Yosef (Joseph), "I, Pharaoh, decree that

without your approval no one is to raise his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt.”⁴⁵ Pharaoh called Yosef (Joseph) by the name Tzafnat-Pa’neach and gave him as his wife Osnat the daughter of Poti-Fera priest of On. Then Yosef went out through all the land of Egypt.”

Joseph’s new name (Zaphnathpaaneah) meant “god speaks, he lives”. – The “nath” part of his name is the name of an Egyptian god. His new wife’s name is Asenath meant “belonging to the goddess Neith”. **Joseph’s new name may have been about a false god, but I think to Joseph it meant, “Jehovah God speaks, He lives” and every time he heard his new name, it reminded him that God is alive and had spoken into his life.**

Even Pharaoh recognized “the Spirit of God” living, inside Joseph as it shown outward from within. In Matthew 5:14-16 Jesus said, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

TRUST GOD TO COMPLETE WHAT HE STARTS

Thirteen years passed from the time Joseph was sold into slavery and when he was delivered and promoted. That is a long time in anyone’s book. But Joseph did not let discouragement come in. He used the weapon of Praise to keep his focus positive. He remained steadfast. **James 1:12 says, “Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.”**

According to verse 42, Joseph was given the “signet ring from Pharaoh’s hand,” “garments of fine linen,” and “a gold chain” about Joseph’s neck. The Pharaoh’s signet ring was the one he used to sign new laws. Joseph now had authority to make new laws. The gold chain was a symbol of royalty and wealth.

PRAISING THE LORD

Joseph was also given garments of fine linen. Joseph had his “coat of many colors” taken from him. Later, he lost his garment when he fled from Potiphar’s wife. Now, Joseph was receiving promotion and given new garments of fine linen, fabric used for the priesthood. When God does restoration, it is complete. It could be that Joseph had to battle the spirit of heaviness in those thirteen plus years and if this spirit of heaviness is bringing you down, it can be replaced with the “**garment of praise.**” Isaiah 61:3 in the King James Version says, “**To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.**” **Joseph’s garment of heaviness was now completely being replaced with the vestment of praise, thanksgiving, and complete forgiveness.**

The book of Job in the Bible tells about a man named Job who lost everything and yet, like Joseph, “... the LORD restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends also. And the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.” (Job’s victory came when he prayed for the very friends who had hurt him.)

God will do the same thing for you. Jesus said to pray for those who have hurt you. Matthew 5:43-45, 48 says, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ...⁴⁸ You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” This is one of God’s principles.

This standard was part of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. Jesus ended that sermon with a parable that was a promise, as well as a warning. Matthew 7:24-27 says, “**Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be**

like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ **And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.** ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.” The only question here should be which are you; wise man or foolish man? What have you built your life on – the solid rock of Jesus? Joseph had built his life on the solid rock of God’s promises and faithfulness to restore what the enemy had taken away.

FORGIVENESS

Genesis 41:46-52 “Yosef (Joseph) was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt; then he left Pharaoh’s presence and traveled through all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the seven years of abundance, the earth brought forth heaps of produce. ⁴⁸ He collected all the food of these seven years in the land of Egypt and stored it in the cities — the food grown in the fields outside each city he stored in that city. ⁴⁹ Yosef (Joseph) stored grain in quantities like the sand on the seashore, so much that they stopped counting, because it was beyond measure.

⁵⁰ Two sons were born to Yosef (Joseph) before the year of famine came; Osnat the daughter of Poti-Fera priest of On bore them to him. ⁵¹ Yosef (Joseph) called the firstborn M’nasheh [causing to forget], “Because God has caused me to forget all the troubles I suffered at the hands of my family.” ⁵² The second he called Efrayim [fruit], “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my misfortune.”

Joseph remained humble and grateful - just look at the names he gave his sons: Manasseh (Hebrew for “forget”) and Efrayim (Hebrew for “twice fruitful”). He gave God all the glory for helping him forget and making him fruitful in a land of affliction. **Joel 2:25 says “I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you.”** God has the ability to restore the years of the swarming locust. Even when you have gone through a long, hard trial, just as Joseph had, God is able to erase the sting of the past as you allow Him to!

In Joshua 4:1-3 God told Joshua to go back where he had just passed through and bring out something: “When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, ² “Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, ³ and command them, saying, ‘Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests’ feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.’” Joshua 4:6-7 tells you why, “that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’ ⁷ then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.” These stones were to be a memorial or reminder of what God had brought them through. **Joseph’s memorial of what he had experienced was in the names of his two sons.** Consider choosing your own “memorial stone” that would remind you of the trials God has brought you through and you have not experienced defeat. Ask God to tell you what that “memorial stone” could be.

In the book, Hinds Feet on High Places by Hannah Hurnard, the heron, Much Afraid, picks up small pebbles along her journey with her Shepherd to the High Places. Each pebble symbolizes a victory over the enemy. The lesson here is to look back to hard trials you have gone through and allow there to be a testimony (your own pebble or memorial stone) to God’s glory.

God builds us and our experience a little at a time. Isaiah 28:9-10 “To whom will he teach knowledge, and to whom will he explain the message? Those who are weaned from the milk, those taken from the breast? ¹⁰ **For it is precept**

upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little." --- Just enjoy each precept and every line. Joseph grew spiritually as he went from shepherd boy, to slave, to head of household at Potiphar's, to inmate, to head of jail, to head of a nation. Joseph chose to find contentment at each stage or difficulty.

THE PEOPLE ALL FOLLOWED JOSEPH'S PLAN

Genesis 41:53-55 "The seven years of abundance in the land of Egypt ended;⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Yosef (Joseph) had said. There was famine in all lands, but throughout the land of Egypt there was food.⁵⁵ When the whole land of Egypt started feeling the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food, and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Yosef (Joseph), and do what he tells you to do."

This reminds me of what Mary told the servants at the wedding at Cana: John 2:5, "His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." That is really good advice for us today, just "Do whatever He tells you." A friend of mine used to say that when God tells you to "jump" your only response should be, "How high?" on your way up.

Genesis 41:56-57 "The famine was over all the earth, but then Yosef (Joseph) opened all the storehouses and sold food to the Egyptians, since the famine was severe in the land of Egypt.⁵⁷ Moreover all countries came to Egypt to Yosef (Joseph) to buy grain, because the famine was severe throughout the earth."

Finally Joseph's plan is going to be put to the test. Joseph, with God's direction, had stored up tons of surplus grain and now came the job of how, and to whom, to dole out the grain.