

Beneath Joseph's Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat: Joseph: The Dream Interpreter (Genesis 41)



*"May I return to the beginning; The light is dimming, and the dream is too.
The world and I, we are still waiting; Still hesitating; Any dream will do¹"**

Despite the grandiose dreams given to Joseph at the beginning of his life -- the affects of being sold into slavery by his own brothers, falsely accused by his master's wife and forgotten in prison by Pharaoh's cupbearer, must have stirred up in Joseph some thoughts similar to these lyrics. But on the other hand, it is remarkable that when Joseph is finally released from prison and given the opportunity to interpret the dreams of Egypt's king he declares, *"The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon"* (Genesis 41:32). These insightful words remind us that Pharaoh's are the third *pair of dreams* presented to Joseph in this story. *The first pair* came at the beginning of the story when God revealed to Joseph through dreams that he would be raised up as a person of great importance. Joseph used the next two dreams to accurately foretell the futures of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker while they were still with him in prison (Genesis 40). So the fact that Joseph knew that *Pharaoh's two similar dreams* sealed the certainty of the 14 years of feast and famine that Pharaoh was about to face tells us that Joseph also knew that *his own pair of dreams* about his life's destiny were also about to be fulfilled. Therefore, Andrew Lloyd Webber's* notion that Joseph was searching for just any old dream as he languished in prison is a fallacy. What kept Joseph's hopes alive during these desolate years was his firm belief that God would do what he had promised. And sure enough, by the middle of this chapter Joseph is once again lifted from lowly status and adorned with the garments of elevated eminence as he embarks on a mission to save the world from starving (Genesis 41:39 - 43). What vision and mission has God given you?

1. What sort of thoughts do you think were going through Joseph's head during the two years that he was forgotten by Pharaoh's cupbearer? (Genesis 40:12 - 15, 23; 41:1).
2. Why do you think God gave Pharaoh these important dreams without putting anyone around him to interpret them? (41:1 - 8)
3. Why do you think that Pharaoh's cupbearer finally remembered Joseph after two full years? (41:9 - 15)
4. How does verse 41:16 express Joseph's humility and faith in God.
5. How did Joseph know exactly what to do in response to Pharaoh's dreams? (41:25 - 36)
6. How do you think Joseph knew that Pharaoh's *pair of dreams* meant that God was about to act (41:25 and 32)
7. Consider the high position and important mission given to Joseph (41:37 - 57). What promises, position and mission has God given to you (us) as his blessed child(ren)?

¹ 'Any Dream Will Do', from the musical, 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' By Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice