

Genesis 39–41 Teaching Outline

Theme: “The Lord Was With Joseph”

1. Joseph in Potiphar’s House – Faithfulness in Unfair Circumstances

Genesis 39:1–6

Joseph is sold into Egypt, but the repeated phrase is the key: “**The Lord was with Joseph.**”

Chuck emphasizes that this did **not** mean Joseph avoided hardship. God’s presence did not spare him from betrayal, slavery, temptation, false accusation, or prison. Instead, God’s presence gave Joseph favor, endurance, and purpose inside the hardship.

Teaching Point:

Being with God does not mean being free from trials. It means God is present, working, and able to prosper His purpose even in painful circumstances.

2. Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife – Purity Through Identity

Genesis 39:7–18

Joseph is tempted repeatedly by Potiphar’s wife. His response is powerful:

“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”

Chuck points out that Joseph understood two things:

Joseph knew **who he was**: a child of God.

Joseph knew **God was present**: even if no one else saw, God saw.

When temptation became physically aggressive, Joseph fled.

Teaching Point:

Running from temptation is not weakness. Sometimes fleeing is the bravest and wisest act of faith.

Cross-reference idea:

Paul tells Timothy to “flee youthful lusts.” Joseph lived that principle before it was written.

3. Joseph in Prison – God’s Presence in the Lowest Place

Genesis 39:19–23

Joseph is falsely accused and imprisoned. Yet again, the narration says:

“But the Lord was with Joseph.”

Chuck highlights the shock of that statement. Joseph is in prison unjustly, forgotten by people, and still God is with him.

Even in prison, Joseph is given favor and responsibility.

Teaching Point:

God’s favor is not limited by location. Joseph was favored in a house, favored in a prison, and eventually favored before Pharaoh.

4. The Butler and Baker – Faithful Service While Waiting

Genesis 40

Two royal officials are imprisoned: Pharaoh’s butler and baker. Both have dreams. Joseph notices their sadness and asks what is wrong.

This shows Joseph was still attentive to others, even while suffering himself.

Joseph makes clear:

“Do not interpretations belong to God?”

He does not take credit for spiritual insight. He points the glory back to God.

The butler’s dream means restoration.

The baker’s dream means judgment.

Both interpretations come true.

But the butler forgets Joseph for two full years.

Teaching Point:

Joseph was faithful when forgotten. Delay did not mean God had abandoned him. It meant God's timing had not yet arrived.

5. Pharaoh's Dream – God Opens the Right Door at the Right Time

Genesis 41:1–36

After two years, Pharaoh dreams of:

Seven fat cows eaten by seven lean cows.

Seven full heads of grain eaten by seven thin heads of grain.

No magician or wise man can interpret the dream. Then the butler finally remembers Joseph.

Joseph is brought before Pharaoh, but again refuses personal credit:

"It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

The interpretation:

Seven years of plenty are coming, followed by seven years of severe famine.

Joseph also gives wisdom: store up 20% during the good years to preserve life during the famine.

Teaching Point:

God's gifts are not for personal promotion only. They are for serving others and preserving life.

6. Joseph Exalted – From Prison to Palace

Genesis 41:37–45

Pharaoh recognizes the Spirit of God in Joseph and appoints him over Egypt.

Joseph receives:

A signet ring.

Fine linen.

A gold chain.

The second chariot.

Authority over the land.

Chuck connects this to Joseph as a type of Christ: rejected by his brothers, humbled through suffering, then exalted to rule.

Teaching Point:

God can use the very road of suffering as the road to calling.

7. Joseph's Sons — Remembering God in Prosperity

Genesis 41:46–52

Joseph has two sons:

Manasseh — “God has made me forget my toil.”

Ephraim — “God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.”

Chuck emphasizes that Joseph did not forget God when life became prosperous. He acknowledged God both in suffering and success.

Teaching Point:

The true test is not only whether we trust God in hardship, but whether we still honor Him in prosperity.

8. The Famine Begins — God's Long Plan Revealed

Genesis 41:53–57

The famine comes exactly as God revealed. Egypt has bread because God prepared Joseph ahead of time.

Chuck's major reflection here: Joseph could now look back and see how the pieces fit.

If Joseph had not been sold, he would not have gone to Egypt.

If he had not been falsely accused, he would not have gone to prison.

If he had not gone to prison, he would not have met the butler.

If he had not met the butler, he would not have stood before Pharaoh.

Teaching Point:

God's plan is often clearest in hindsight. What feels like abandonment may later prove to be preparation.

Main Lesson Summary

Genesis 39–41 shows that **God was with Joseph in every stage:**

In slavery.

In temptation.

In false accusation.

In prison.

In delay.

In promotion.

In prosperity.

The repeated lesson is not that Joseph avoided hardship, but that God was present and purposeful through it all.

Closing Thought

Joseph's life reminds us that God may be preparing us through circumstances we would never choose. The valley may not make sense while we are walking through it, but from the vista point later, we may see that the Lord was leading all the way.