

5. God's word was widely recognized

5. **God's word was widely recognized.** It is wonderful when God speaks with indisputable power and authority. Pharaoh recognized instantly that what Joseph had said was from God. '*The thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants*' ^{□1} (the translation, 'it seemed good', is misleading; it **was** good). Pharaoh also recognizes that there is some kind of '*Spirit of God*' in Joseph ^{□2}.

□1 41:37
□2 41:38

• *When the word of God comes with power it proves itself*

When the word of God comes with power it proves itself. It carries its own convicting power. When God's Spirit is powerfully at work, no one has to talk about 'proving' that something is a word from God. The word comes with such power that it proves itself! Paul said his gospel came '*with full conviction*' ^{□1}. It might be asked: who had the 'conviction' Paul or his hearers? The answer is: both! When God's word comes with power the speaker is fully assured he is speaking from God, and the hearers are also fully convinced they are hearing from God.

□1 1 Thess
1:5

6. The channel of God's word came into a position of eminence and importance

6. **The channel of God's word came into a position of eminence and importance.** After years of suffering Joseph was able to be exalted without becoming too proud. Our spiritual giftedness makes itself known. Where the church is functioning as it should giftedness will be recognized. Every Christian has at least one gift of the Holy Spirit; every Christian has some ministry within the church of Jesus Christ. Our gift leads us into our right place in the functioning of God's church. It is a wonderful thing when we get to be where we ought to be and where God has destined us. It does not need any kind of manipulation. Joseph's efforts to get himself out of Pharaoh's dungeon had not worked at all. When at last he was ready it took no manipulation at all. With the greatest of ease and without his doing anything at all he was lifted into the position that he had been trained for. Pharaoh recognized that God had revealed the future to Joseph ^{□1}; he recognized his suitability as the administrator that Egypt needed ^{□2} and immediately gave him great authority ^{□3}. He was given the sign of authority, the signet ring ^{□4}. He was given clothing that gave him dignity, and a gold necklace that was the sign of his importance. When God had started his painful training many years before he had lost importance and at the same time he lost the coat with long sleeves. Now he was given back importance and the clothing that went with it.

□1 41:39
□2 41:39
□3 41:40-41
□4 41:42

• *It does not need any kind of manipulation get to be where we ought to be and where God has destined us*

He now had freedom to act with authority ^{□1}. (There is a difficult word in the original that seems to be an Egyptian word meaning 'Bow the knee!'). All authority was put into his hand and nothing happened except through him. This is like the present position of Jesus. Jesus is the king of the universe and everything that the Father does He does through the rule of His Son. When God exalts us we share in this sovereignty of Jesus, and to a lesser and limited extent we reign and rule with Jesus. It is not a matter of worldly triumph. It is a matter of ruling in a kingdom of love and compassion. Joseph ruled Egypt in order to be a blessing to Egypt and to be like a father and a shepherd over the people.

□1 41:43

• *Freedom to rule with love and compassion*

• *Acceptance with the people*

Joseph was given an Egyptian name to make him acceptable to the people ^{□1}. His marriage to an Egyptian priest's daughter must also have brought him some acceptance ^{□2}. He was given work to do which took him through the length and breadth of the land of Egypt ^{□3}.

□1 41:45
□2 41:45
□3 41:45b-46

7. God's word through Joseph had prediction in it and the fulfillment confirmed that it was truly from God

7. God's word through Joseph had prediction in it and the fulfillment confirmed that it was truly from God. If there had not been seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine, Joseph's word from God would have been suspect. When there is prediction in God's word, fulfillment is a vital matter. As Joseph had said, there were seven years of plenty and Joseph followed the word that he had revealed from God ¹.

¹ 41:47-49

God keeps His word. Whether it is some small revelation God has given to us about our future or whether it is some great prediction that comes in the Scriptures, God will keep His word. During this time Joseph had two sons, Manasseh ('He who causes forgetfulness') his firstborn, and Ephraim ('Fruitfulness') his second son. God has repaid Joseph for his many years of trouble with great happiness and fruitfulness ¹.

¹ 41:50-52

The seven years of famine followed, also confirming the authenticity of God's word ¹.

¹ 41:53-57

8. Faithfulness to God's word brings Joseph many rewards.

8. Faithfulness to God's word brings Joseph many rewards. Joseph had been utterly frank and straightforward with Pharaoh. He had been as faithful in telling Pharaoh about famine as he had been about telling Pharaoh's baker about death. His faithfulness is rewarded. He has position, authority, a family, joy which makes him forget all his sorrows, fruitfulness which gives him a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction. The famine was severe throughout the world. The events that have happened are about to bring Joseph into contact with Canaan. His calling involves the nations of the world. At this time Joseph had given up any expectation of ever seeing Jacob or his brothers again. His new life made him forget 'all his father's house' ¹. But part of his reward was involvement in the plan of God for the line of Jacob. Joseph was probably wondering whether he had finished forever with Jacob and his ten cruel brothers. He had many years before announced God's word to his brothers when he told them that he would rule over them. At that time he revealed God's word with great immaturity and foolishness. But God's word stands firm. The story is moving towards the time when the fulfilment of God's word in the minutest detail is about to take place. Joseph is faithful to God's word. When the word is vindicated, he will be vindicated as well.

¹ 41:51

• The story is moving towards the time when the fulfilment of God's word in the minutest detail is about to take place

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