

## **Dr. Kenneth Mathews, Genesis, Session 22, Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 39-41) Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Mathews, Genesis, Session 22, Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 39-41), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Kenneth Mathews' Genesis session 22** examines Joseph's life in Egypt (Genesis 39-41), contrasting his righteous conduct with his brother Judah's failings. **The lecture analyzes Joseph's descent into slavery and subsequent rise to power**, highlighting God's continuous presence and blessing in his life. **Joseph's interpretation of dreams**, including Pharaoh's, is presented as a divinely granted gift, ultimately saving Egypt and foreshadowing God's broader plan of salvation. **The session explores thematic elements** such as descent and ascent, clothing symbolism, and the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham. Finally, **it connects Joseph's role as savior of Egypt to Jesus' role as savior of the world.**

**2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Mathews, Genesis, Session 22 – Double click icon to play  
in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org  
[BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old  
Testament → Pentateuch → Genesis).**



**Mathews\_Genesis\_  
Session22.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Mathews, Genesis, Session 22, Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 39-41)

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from Dr. Kenneth Mathews' lecture on Genesis 39-41, focusing on Joseph in Egypt:

#### **Briefing Document: Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 39-41)**

##### **Overview:**

This lecture examines Joseph's experiences in Egypt, highlighting God's sovereignty, Joseph's faithfulness, and the unfolding of God's plan for salvation. It contrasts Joseph's story with both Judah's moral failures and Abraham's flawed encounter in Egypt. The lecture also foreshadows the role of Joseph in providing for his family and, ultimately, a wider salvation narrative.

##### **Key Themes and Ideas:**

##### **1. God's Presence and Favor:**

- The most prominent theme is that "the Lord was with Joseph" (Genesis 39:2, 21, 23). This phrase underscores that Joseph's success, prosperity, and rise to power are not due to his own abilities alone but to God's blessing.
- Quote: "The prosperity that Joseph will experience is the result of God's favor and blessing in his life. Although Joseph was a highly competent man, this was ultimately the gift of God."
- This divine favor is crucial for Joseph's ability to become a source of blessing to Egypt and ultimately his own family.

##### **1. Joseph as an Interpreter of Dreams:**

- Joseph's ability to interpret dreams is presented as a gift from God, not a personal clairvoyance.
- Quote: "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams." (Genesis 40:8) Joseph consistently attributes the ability to interpret dreams to God.
- His interpretation of the cupbearer's, baker's, and Pharaoh's dreams is vital for his rise to power. It also reinforces the idea of God's active role in shaping events.
- Quote: "I cannot do it, but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires." (Genesis 41:16)

### 1. **Contrast between Joseph and Judah:**

- The narrative draws a deliberate contrast between Joseph's integrity and Judah's moral failures. Judah's incestuous relationship with Tamar is presented as a disgrace, whereas Joseph's rejection of Potiphar's wife's advances demonstrates his honor.
- Quote: "Judah, disgraceful. Joseph is honorable in his respect for Potiphar, his master."
- This contrast emphasizes the righteousness that God's blessing and favor rests upon.

### 1. **Descent and Ascent Motif:**

- Joseph's life is depicted as a series of descents—from being thrown in a cistern, sold into slavery, and imprisoned—followed by a dramatic ascent to power.
- Quote: "It has been said that where you will find God is at the bottom of your rope."
- This journey from "bottom of the rope" to the second in command of Egypt is a narrative tool highlighting that God is working through his low point to eventually elevate him.
- This serves as a reminder that even in the deepest trials, God is present and actively working toward a greater purpose.

### 1. **Temptation and Fleeing Sin:**

- Joseph's response to Potiphar's wife's seduction attempts is framed as a model of resisting temptation.
- Quote: "How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9)
- His flight from temptation and the repeated rejection of the advances illustrates the need to remove oneself from situations that lead to sin.
- This is compared to advice from Proverbs and Paul's letters, emphasizing the importance of fleeing temptation.

### 1. **God's Sovereignty Over Circumstances:**

- Despite being unjustly imprisoned, Joseph's consistent prosperity even within prison shows that God is with him, regardless of the circumstances.
- Quote: "The Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did." (Genesis 39:23)
- Even while he is forgotten by the cupbearer, God is bringing Joseph to his rise.
- This highlights that God's plan is being worked out even through difficult situations.

### 1. **Foreshadowing of Salvation:**

- Joseph's role in saving Egypt from famine prefigures the future work of Jesus Christ, who would come to be the savior of the world.
- Joseph's actions demonstrate how God's blessings extend beyond a single family or nation, foreshadowing the broader scope of salvation in Christ.
- Quote: "He is said to be and acknowledges that he was the savior of the whole world, all the nations who descended into Egypt during this time of famine."
- Quote: "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was sent into the world to be the Savior of the world." (referencing 1 John 4:14)
- The provision of food during the famine is used to represent the salvation that is to come.

### 1. **Joseph's Transformation and Identity:**

- Joseph's clothing is a motif, as he loses his special robe from his father, puts on prison garments, and then receives fine linens and royal garments from Pharaoh, symbolizing his shifting status and also his spiritual journey.
- His new Egyptian name and marriage to an Egyptian woman indicate his assimilation to the culture and a risk of forgetting his origins.
- The names of his sons, Manasseh (forgetting) and Ephraim (twice fruitful), reflect his desire to move beyond past suffering and embrace the present blessings.

### 1. The Significance of Double Dreams:

- The recurrence of double dreams (Joseph's, the cupbearer's and baker's, and Pharaoh's) is seen as a way to confirm the authenticity and importance of the message.
- Quote: "For the dream was given to Pharaoh, two dreams, in two forms, so that the matter, the substance of the dreams, has been confirmedly decided by God. And God will do it soon." (Genesis 41:32)

### Important Facts:

- Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers to Ishmaelite traders, who took him to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar (captain of the guard).
- Joseph was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and imprisoned.
- In prison, Joseph interprets the dreams of the cupbearer and baker, predicting the cupbearer's restoration and the baker's execution.
- Pharaoh has two troubling dreams that his wise men cannot interpret.
- The cupbearer remembers Joseph and recommends him to Pharaoh.
- Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams, predicting seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine.
- Based on this wisdom, Pharaoh elevates Joseph to second-in-command of Egypt.
- Joseph oversees the collection and storage of grain during the plentiful years and distributes it during the famine.
- Joseph is 30 years old when he enters Pharaoh's service, 13 years after he was sold by his brothers.

### Conclusion:

Dr. Mathews presents Joseph's narrative as a powerful example of God's sovereignty, faithfulness, and plan for salvation. Joseph's story is not just an individual's success story, but it forms a crucial part of the redemptive arc that leads from Abraham, to Joseph's family, and ultimately, to the coming of Jesus Christ as savior of the world.

## 4. Study Guide: Mathews, Genesis, Session 22, Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 39-41)

### Joseph in Egypt: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer each question in 2-3 complete sentences.

1. What event led to Joseph's arrival in Egypt, and who did he serve upon arriving?
2. What is the significance of the recurring phrase, "The Lord was with Joseph" throughout these chapters?
3. How does Joseph explain his ability to interpret dreams, and what does he say about the source of that ability?
4. Contrast Abraham's experience in Egypt with that of Joseph's experience.
5. Describe the moral contrast between Judah and Joseph in the stories presented in Genesis 38-39.
6. Explain the symbolism of Joseph's descent and subsequent rise in Egypt.
7. How does Joseph resist temptation from Potiphar's wife, and what does it demonstrate about his character?
8. What is significant about the dreams of the cupbearer and the baker?
9. How does the cupbearer's forgetfulness affect Joseph's story, and what theological idea does this illustrate?
10. What is the meaning behind the names of Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and how do they reflect his mindset at the time?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and taken to Egypt by a caravan of Ishmaelites/Midianites. Upon arriving in Egypt, he was sold to Potiphar, an important official and captain of the guard in Pharaoh's bureaucracy.
2. The phrase signifies that Joseph's success and prosperity were a result of God's favor and blessing. While Joseph was a capable man, the text emphasizes that God was the ultimate source of his abilities and achievements.

3. Joseph explains that his ability to interpret dreams comes from God, not from any power he possesses himself. He emphasizes that interpretations belong to God and that he is only the means through which God reveals their meanings.
4. Abraham went to Egypt because of famine, but he deceived Pharaoh, leading to his expulsion. In contrast, Joseph became a source of blessing in Egypt, fulfilling part of the promise to Abraham that his offspring would bless the nations.
5. Judah's story demonstrates moral degradation, shown through his incestuous relationship with Tamar. Conversely, Joseph maintains his honor by repeatedly rejecting the advances of Potiphar's wife, demonstrating loyalty to his master and faithfulness to God.
6. Joseph's descent into slavery, then prison, symbolizes his lowest point. His subsequent rise to power, from prison to second in command, demonstrates God's power to elevate him despite his circumstances.
7. Joseph consistently refuses Potiphar's wife, viewing it not just as a betrayal of his master, but a sin against God. He also runs from the situation, showing that to resist temptation, one must physically remove oneself.
8. The dreams of the cupbearer and the baker demonstrate that God is in control. They also serve as a bridge to Joseph being called before Pharaoh to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams.
9. Although the cupbearer forgets Joseph, his forgetfulness is not the ultimate factor in Joseph's future; rather, God's purpose to bring Joseph to power is what matters. This illustrates that even human forgetfulness does not deter God's plan.
10. Manasseh's name means "to forget," which Joseph says is because God has made him forget his troubles and his father's household. Ephraim's name means "twice fruitful," reflecting Joseph's gratitude that God has made him fruitful in the land of his suffering.

## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Answer each question thoroughly, demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of the source material.

1. Analyze the literary devices used by the narrator in Genesis 39-41 to convey theological themes. Discuss how elements like the contrast between Judah and Joseph, the theme of descent and rise, and the recurring motif of clothing, contribute to the meaning of the narrative.
2. Discuss the role of dreams in Genesis 39-41. How does Joseph interpret dreams, and what does his interpretation reveal about his relationship with God? Explore how these dreams contribute to the unfolding narrative.
3. Compare and contrast the characters of Joseph and Pharaoh in Genesis 41. How does the encounter between these two characters demonstrate the working of God's sovereignty in the story of Joseph? Consider also, how their differing positions contribute to the narrative's meaning.
4. Explore the ways in which the story of Joseph in Egypt fulfills, in part, God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3. How does Joseph become a source of blessing, and what does this reveal about God's plan for the world?
5. Evaluate the idea that Joseph undergoes a transformation in Egypt, transitioning from a Hebrew to someone taking on more of an Egyptian identity. How does the text seem to present this change, and does the text seem to celebrate, regret, or perhaps suggest that this was necessary?



## Glossary of Key Terms

**Cistern:** An underground storage container for water.

**Ishmaelites/Midianites:** A traveling caravan that bought and sold Joseph into slavery in Egypt.

**Potiphar:** An important Egyptian official, captain of the guard, and Joseph's master in Egypt.

**Pharaoh:** The ruler of Egypt, holding supreme political and religious authority.

**Canaan:** The land promised to Abraham's descendants; also the region from which Joseph was taken.

**Tamar:** Judah's daughter-in-law, with whom he has a complicated relationship.

**The Lord was with Joseph:** A phrase emphasizing God's presence, favor, and blessing in Joseph's life.

**Interpretation of dreams:** Joseph's gift, given by God, to understand the meaning of dreams.

**Descent and Rise:** A literary motif in which Joseph is brought low by slavery and imprisonment, then is elevated to a position of power.

**Cupbearer:** An official who serves wine to the Pharaoh.

**Baker:** An official who provides baked goods to the Pharaoh.

**Manasseh:** Joseph's firstborn son, whose name means "to forget."

**Ephraim:** Joseph's second son, whose name means "twice fruitful."

**Zaphenath-paneah:** The Egyptian name given to Joseph by Pharaoh.

## 5. FAQs on Mathews, Genesis, Session 22, Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 39-41), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 39-41)

1. **How does the narrative of Joseph in Egypt connect back to earlier events and prophecies in Genesis?**
2. The story of Joseph's journey to Egypt and subsequent rise to power is directly linked to his brothers' betrayal in chapter 37. They sold him into slavery, which led to his being brought to Egypt. Furthermore, it fulfills a prophecy from Genesis 15:13, where God foretold that Abraham's offspring would be enslaved in a foreign land for 400 years. Joseph's arrival in Egypt, followed by the eventual migration of Jacob's family, initiates this period of sojourn and eventual enslavement of the Hebrew people.
3. **What is the significance of the recurring statement, "The Lord was with Joseph," throughout the narrative?**
4. This phrase emphasizes that Joseph's successes, despite the hardships he faced, were ultimately due to God's favor and blessing. While Joseph was competent and hardworking, his prosperity and ascent to power were a direct result of God's grace and the divine enabling, designed to position him to provide for his family. This divine presence highlights that God is working through Joseph to fulfill his purposes.
5. **How does Joseph's ability to interpret dreams reflect his relationship with God, and how is this demonstrated in the text?**
6. Joseph's interpretations of dreams are not attributed to any clairvoyant ability of his own, but are explicitly shown as gifts from God. In Genesis 40:8, Joseph himself states, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" He consistently credits God as the source of his understanding, refusing to take any personal credit. This is further shown in chapter 41 when he interprets Pharaoh's dream, attributing the knowledge to God and stating that "God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires". His humility and reliance on God are central to the narrative.

7. **How does Joseph's experience in Egypt contrast with Abraham's earlier visit to Egypt?**
8. Unlike Abraham, who resorted to deception and was expelled from Egypt, Joseph serves as a source of blessing to the nation. Abraham's actions during his sojourn in Egypt fell short of God's intentions for his offspring to be a blessing to the nations. Conversely, Joseph's righteous conduct and actions ultimately led to the salvation of Egypt and surrounding nations from famine, highlighting a fulfillment, at least in part, of the Abrahamic covenant. Joseph's actions demonstrate the ideal God intends for Abraham's lineage.
9. **How is Joseph's moral integrity highlighted in his interaction with Potiphar's wife, and how does this compare to Judah's actions in the preceding chapter?**
10. Joseph's consistent refusal of Potiphar's wife's advances showcases his deep moral integrity and his respect for both God and his master. He sees succumbing to temptation as a sin against both. This is in stark contrast to Judah's actions in chapter 38, where he engaged in a disgraceful incestuous relationship with his daughter-in-law Tamar. This contrast establishes Joseph as an exemplar of righteousness and Godly behavior in contrast to the moral decline displayed by other members of Jacob's family.
11. **Describe the pattern of descent and ascent in Joseph's story, and what does this pattern reveal about God's hand in his life?**
12. The narrative portrays Joseph's life in a pattern of descent and subsequent rising. He is first thrown into a cistern, then sold into slavery, and finally imprisoned. These low points are followed by a reversal of fortune each time, as he rises to positions of power, first in Potiphar's house, then in prison and finally to second in command of all Egypt. This narrative structure demonstrates that even during times of deep hardship, God is working in Joseph's life, to elevate him to positions of greater influence and impact.

**13. What is the significance of the double dreams, both Joseph's own dreams and the dreams of the cupbearer, baker, and Pharaoh?**

The double dreams serve as confirmation of the authenticity and importance of the divine message. As stated in Genesis 41:32, "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". This pattern emphasizes that the message was meant to be taken seriously as the word of God and provides further evidence of God's plan in Joseph's story. The repetition of the dream motif also highlights the way God uses supernatural means, like dreams, to communicate and shape Joseph's journey.

**1. How does Joseph's story foreshadow God's plan of salvation and provision for the world?**

Joseph's role in storing grain during the years of plenty and then distributing it during the famine mirrors God's provision for the entire world during a time of crisis. The narrative ultimately highlights Joseph as a savior for the nations during a time of famine, prefiguring the concept of Jesus Christ being the ultimate savior of the world as described in 1 John 4:14. The text emphasizes how God uses Joseph to provide food for the world, showing that God's plan is not solely focused on Israel, but through them extends to the whole world and that God did not forget those nations either, much like how he did not forget Joseph and his family.