



Key Idea

Like Joseph, we have knowledge of what God has planned for our future, and that can have a profound impact in the present.



Listen

This study is written to be used together with the sermon preached at Trinity Church which you can find on our church website.

www.trinitybay.church/sermon-archive/



Talk About

1. Here's one that'll help your group get to know each other a bit better. Share with the group whether or not you often dream. Do you tend to remember many of your dreams? Have you had any reoccurring dreams or ones that stick in your mind? Can you remember your most recent dream?



Explore

Last week we saw that Joseph's story got off to a pretty brutal start. He was throw into a pit. Sold into slavery. Taken away from home, and into Egypt. And then even after things had seemed to be going a little better, he was falsely accused of rape and thrown into Jail. Despite all that hardship, however, there have been indications of God still being with Joseph - blessing seems to follow him, and of course there were those dreams that hinted that Joseph would one day rule. Today we start to see his life turn around and head in that direction.



Read Genesis 40

2. How would you describe how Joseph is seen in the prison? What sort of role does he have in the prison?
3. Who does Joseph say has the power to interpret dreams? Given what Joseph's been through, are you surprised to see him having this sort of faith?
4. What does Jospheh ask the cupbearer to do? Are you surprised the cupbearer fails to come through?

5. What picture does the end of the chapter give you of Pharaoh? What sort of power does he have?



Read Genesis 41:1-36

6. What does Joseph again emphasise about who can interpret dreams?

7. What do verses 28-32 show us about God's power and how it compares to Pharaoh's?

8. What significance does Joseph give to the 'double dream'? What other double dream have we seen in the story of Joseph? How might this be impacting Joseph's faith and confidence?

9. Are you surprised by what Joseph says in verses 33-36?



Read Genesis 41:37-57

10. How are you seeing God come through with what he's promised (through the dreams) to Joseph?
How are we seeing God come through with what he's promised to Joseph's forefathers?

Application

11. It's been a fairly chaotic decade or so for Joseph - quite a rollercoaster ride. What has the text made clear about God's role in everything that's happened to him?

12. What knowledge helped Joseph through his suffering? What knowledge do we have about our futures in the gospel? What difference might our knowledge make in the middle of our suffering?

13. Joseph and the Egyptians knew what God was going to do over the next 14 years and they sprung into action. It affected their priorities in the present. How might knowing God's promises of what is in store in our future affect our present priorities today?

Some Extra Notes

Today's study should help us see that knowing God's promises, and knowing what he has in store for us in the future, should make a difference for us in the present. This is what we've seen in Joseph's life. We've seen multiple times in the last couple of weeks where God revealed the future to Joseph. The two main ones were: (1) in Genesis 37 where he revealed that he would raise Joseph up. This knowledge seemed to help Joseph as he went through suffering and hardship. Then, (2) God revealed the future to Joseph again when he gave him the knowledge about the 7 years of good harvest and 7 years of famine. This knowledge also had an impact, as Joseph and the rest of Egypt rearranged their priorities to trust in what God had said. I think we can ask ourselves - how does our knowledge of the future, that God's revealed to us through Jesus, affect us as we do things like endure suffering and consider our priorities?

- Question 2 - notice Joseph's obvious trustworthiness and skill. This was detailed a bit more at the end of chapter 39.

- Question 3 - okay to move fairly quickly here. I'd just note that given his hardship and years away from family you'd almost forgive him for totally forgetting about God.

- Question 8 - see Genesis 37. We don't really know how much Joseph understood of his earlier dreams, but he does seem to live with a confidence that God is doing something in his life. This might explain his boldness at the end of his speech to Pharaoh (see question 9).

- Question 10 - Consider Genesis 12 and the promise of blessing to all nations. Through Joseph 'the whole world' can come to Egypt to eat and so won't run out of food. On a side note, in case it comes up, I think this is clearly hyperbole, something the Bible is okay to use from time to time at least.