

GROUP LEADER'S NOTES – STUDY 9

QUESTION 1

- a) Pharaoh would not have understood the idea of the Spirit of God being on Joseph in the same way we do today.
- b) But here is a man of ability and integrity that clearly comes from something beyond human means.
- c) In verse 39 Pharaoh also takes to heart Joseph's earlier testimony that it is only God who can reveal the truth of the dreams (see **verse 16**).
- d) Pharaoh recognises that the power is with God; not with the man. That power has been given to Joseph. We see a similar thing in **Daniel 5:14** when King Belshazzar addresses Daniel about interpreting the writing on the wall.
- e) The new name that Joseph is given by the king in verse 45 means 'God has spoken and He lives'.

QUESTION 2

- a) We must not underestimate what Pharaoh does here.
- b) Not only does he accept the interpretation of the dreams by this Hebrew prisoner; which is remarkable in itself.
- c) He also makes the decision that in all of the country, Joseph is the right person to do the job of seeing the nation through this crisis.
- d) This shows the work of God in this powerful man's life; even though he would never acknowledge it (see **Proverbs 21:1**).
- e) God is working in this man's heart to recognise something in Joseph which He will use to carry out His greater purposes.

QUESTION 3

- a) This is an incredible turnaround.
- b) From languishing forgotten in a prison cell in the morning; by evening he is sitting next to Pharaoh as the second most powerful individual in the land.
- c) Remember that Egypt was the greatest power in the world at that time.
- d) The gold chain represents honour. The signet ring had the king's seal on it. It was the equivalent of giving Joseph the king's credit card. Whenever he presented it he could have whatever he wanted.
- e) In effect, Joseph will perform the same functions as the king and can expect the same response from the people to what he commands.
- f) Notice in verse 43 that people had to bow the knee before him. We begin to see the fulfilment of those dreams he had all those years ago.

QUESTION 4

- a) He's been in the pit and the prison. Now he's in the palace; arguably the hardest place to be as he seeks to live for God.
- b) Was he the only person in the country who trusted God? As far as we know, he probably was.
- c) There is nothing in Joseph's story so far that indicates he is going to be able to carry out this great task. Remember; the survival of the nation is at stake.
- d) This shows God's grace on his life; enabling him to exercise this role effectively.
- e) Joseph serves here with the same devotion that he had when he was in slavery and in prison.
- f) Notice the way God provides. The grain was like the sand of the sea. It would have been easy to just enjoy the plenty. But Joseph was wise and it was stored away.

QUESTION 5

- a) He has had to marry an Egyptian wife. He is in a pagan environment. But he remembers his God. He is not an Egyptian; but one of God's people.
- b) This has been evident in this chapter as Joseph continually acknowledges God (see **verses 16, 25, 28, 32**).
- c) Joseph gives his two sons names that are a testimony to his faith. Note that they are Hebrew names; not Egyptian!
- d) Joseph acknowledges the hand of God on his life. He is still conscious of God's providence.
- e) It is no coincidence that in verse 46 we are reminded of how many years it has been since his brothers planned to kill him; and then sold him into slavery (see **Genesis 37:2**).

QUESTION 6

- a) God's purposes for Joseph were not just to save a nation in time of famine, but to extend that to other nations.
- b) We get a glimpse of God's purposes through this family. This verse opens the door for Joseph's family to be saved. In turn, the nation through which God's covenant purposes will be fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, is preserved.
- c) In that sense, Joseph points us forward to Jesus who will be the ultimate Saviour of all nations.
- d) Roger Ellsworth: *"While Joseph had authority to open the storehouses of Egypt, Jesus opens the storehouse of salvation on the basis of far greater authority. The authority by which Joseph operated was Pharaoh's. The authority by which Jesus operates is God's, and it is to Jesus alone that God has granted authority to open the storehouse of salvation. No one else can do so. Jesus Himself said, 'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth'".*