

Persistence Pays

Genesis 41

One night while Joseph was in jail, the king had a dream. He dreamed he was standing beside the river and suddenly seven fat healthy cows came out of the river and started eating the grass along the riverbank. Then seven ugly skinny cows came up out of the river and ate the fat cows.

The king woke up. "This dream means something!" he said to himself and went back to sleep.

He had another dream. In it seven big fat bunches of grain were eaten up by seven skinny dried out bunches of grain.

"I need to know what these dreams mean," he said.

He called in anybody who he thought might know, but no one did. By this time, the king was quite upset. Then his own servant, the same one who had been in jail with Joseph, remembered he knew someone who knew about dreams. He said to the King, "Your majesty, I know someone who can tell you what your dreams mean. I met him in jail. His name is Joseph."

After Joseph changed his clothes he was brought before the king. "I had a dream," the king told Joseph. "No one can explain it, but they tell me you know the meanings of dreams. Can you tell me?"

"I can't do it by myself," Joseph said, "but God can."

The king told Joseph about both his dreams. When he had finished Joseph said, "God is telling you that for the next seven years there will be plenty of rain and food. But after that will come seven bad years, with no rain and not enough food. People will be thin and hungry, and some will die."

"That's bad! What am I going to do?" the king exclaimed.

"Save some of the food from the good years. Put it all in safe places. Then when the bad years come, there will be enough for everyone to eat," Joseph told him.

The king liked the plan and he knew just the person to put in charge. "Joseph, God has told you these things. No one is as wise as you are. I can see that God is with you. I'm putting you in charge of my palace. You are now the governor of all Egypt!" And he gave him a new coat, a gold chain and a ring.

Over the next seven good years Joseph had lots of servants collect a great amount of food and put it away until the bad years came. The plan was going well.

The seven bad years came and food wouldn't grow, but there was plenty of food in store in Egypt because of all Joseph's good work. He was persistent in trusting God. And we see how God was putting him in a place of great importance.

In other countries though, people were going hungry, the food was running out. One of those countries was the land where Joseph had come from, the place his father and brothers still lived.

People would die if they can't get enough food and Joseph's family didn't have much left.