

Miqeitz

Genesis 41:1 - 44:17

Chapter 41

1 After two years' time, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, 2 when out of the Nile there came up seven cows, handsome and sturdy, and they grazed in the reed grass. 3 But presently, seven other cows came up from the Nile close behind them, ugly and gaunt, and stood beside the cows on the bank of the Nile; 4 and the ugly gaunt cows ate up the seven handsome sturdy cows. And Pharaoh awoke.

5 He fell asleep and dreamed a second time: Seven ears of grain, solid and healthy, grew on a single stalk. 6 But close behind them sprouted seven ears, thin and scorched by the cast wind. 7 And the thin ears swallowed up the seven solid and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke: it was a dream!

8 Next morning, his spirit was agitated, and he sent for all the magicians of Egypt, and all its wise men; and Pharaoh told them his dreams, but none could interpret them for Pharaoh.

9 The chief cupbearer then spoke up and said to Pharaoh, "I must make mention today of my offenses. 10 Once Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and placed me in custody in the house of the chief steward, together with the chief baker. 11 We had dreams the same night, he and I, each of us a dream with a meaning of its own. 12 A Hebrew youth was there with us, a servant of the chief steward; and when we told him Our dreams, he interpreted them for us, telling each of the meaning of his dream. 13 And as he interpreted for us, so it came to pass: I was restored to my post, and the other was impaled."

14 Thereupon Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was rushed from the dungeon. He had his hair cut and changed his clothes, and he appeared before Pharaoh. 15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it. Now I have heard it said of you that for you to hear a dream is to tell its meaning." 16 Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "Not I! God will see to Pharaoh's welfare."

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "In my dream, I was standing on the bank of the Nile, 18 when out of the Nile came up seven sturdy and wellformed cows and grazed in the reed grass. 19 Presently there followed them seven other cows, scrawny, ill-formed, and emaciated — never had I seen their likes for ugliness all the land of Egypt! 20 And the seven lean and ugly cows ate up the first seven cows, the sturdy ones; 21 but when they had consumed them, one could not tell that they had consumed them, for they looked just as bad as before. And I awoke. 22 In my other dream, I saw seven

ears of grain, full and healthy, growing on a single stalk; 23 but right behind them sprouted seven ears, shriveled, thin, and scorched by the east wind. 24 And the thin ears swallowed the seven healthy ears. I have told my magicians, but none has an explanation for me."

25 And Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one and the same: God has told Pharaoh what He is about to do. 26 The seven healthy cows are seven years, and the seven healthy ears are seven years; it is the same dream. 27 The seven lean and ugly cows that followed are seven years, as are also the seven empty ears scorched by the east wind; they are seven years of famine. 28 It is just as I have told Pharaoh: God has revealed to Pharaoh what He is about to do. 29 Immediately ahead are seven years of great abundance in all the land of Egypt. 30 After them will come seven years of famine, and all the abundance in the land of Egypt will be forgotten. As the land is ravaged by famine, 31 no trace of the abundance will be left in the land because of the famine thereafter, for it will be very severe. 32 As for Pharaoh having had the same dream twice, it means that the matter has been determined by God, and that God will soon carry it out.

33 "Accordingly, let Pharaoh find a man of discernment and wisdom, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34 And let Pharaoh take steps to appoint overseers over the land, and organize the land of Egypt in the seven years of plenty. 35 Let all the food of these good years that are coming be gathered, and let the grain be collected under Pharaoh's authority as food to be stored in the cities. 36 Let that food be a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will come upon the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish in the famine."

37 The plan pleased Pharaoh and all his courtiers. 38 And Pharaoh said to his courtiers, "Could we find another like him, a man in whom is the spirit of God?" 39 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is none so discerning and wise as you. 40 You shall be in charge of my court, and by your command shall all my people be directed; only with respect to the throne shall I be superior to you." 41 Pharaoh further said to Joseph, "See, I put you in charge of all the land of Egypt." 42 And removing his signet ring from his hand, Pharaoh put it on Joseph's hand; and he had him dressed in robes of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. 43 He had him ride in the chariot of his second-in-command, and they cried before him, "Abrek!" Thus he placed him over all the land of Egypt.

44 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh; yet without you, no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." 45 Pharaoh then gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him for a wife Asenath daughter of Poti-phera, priest of On. Thus Joseph emerged in charge of the land of Egypt. — 46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. — Leaving Pharaoh's presence, Joseph traveled through all the land of Egypt.

47 During the seven years of plenty, the land produced in abundance. 48 And he

gathered all the grain of the seven years that the land of Egypt was enjoying, and stored the grain in the cities; he put in each city the grain of the fields around it. 49 So Joseph collected produce in very large quantity, like the sands of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.

50 Before the years of famine came, Joseph became the father of two sons, whom Asenath daughter of Poti-phares, priest of On, bore to him. 51 Joseph named the first-born Manasseh, meaning, "God has made me forget completely my hardship and my parental home." 52 And the second he named Ephraim, meaning, "God has made me fertile in the land of my affliction."

53 The seven years of abundance that the land of Egypt enjoyed came to an end, 54 and the seven years of famine set in, just as Joseph had foretold. There was famine in all lands, but throughout the land of Egypt there was bread. 55 And when all the land of Egypt felt the hunger, the people cried out to Pharaoh for bread; and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he tells you, you shall do." — 56 Accordingly, when the famine became severe in the land of Egypt, Joseph laid open all that was within, and rationed out grain to the Egyptians. The famine, however, spread over the whole world. 57 So all the world came to Joseph in Egypt to procure rations, for the famine had become severe throughout the world.

Chapter 42

1 When Jacob saw that there were food rations to be had in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why do you keep looking at one another? 2 Now I hear," he went on, "that there are rations to be had in Egypt. Go down and procure rations for us there, that we may live and not die." 3 So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to get grain rations in Egypt; 4 for Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, since he feared that he might meet with disaster. 5 Thus the sons of Israel were among those who came to procure rations, for the famine extended to the land of Canaan.

6 Now Joseph was the vizier of the land; it was he who dispensed rations to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed low to him, with their faces to the ground. 7 When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them; but he acted like a stranger toward them, and spoke harshly to them. He asked them, "Where do you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to procure food." 8 For though Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. 9 Recalling the dreams that he had dreamed about them, Joseph said to them, "You are spies, you have come to see the land in its nakedness." 10 But they said to him, "No, my lord! Truly, your servants have come to procure food. 11 We are all of us sons of the same man; we are honest men; your servants have never been spies!" 12 And he said to them, "No, you have come to see the land in its nakedness!" 13 And they replied, "We your servants were twelve brothers, sons of a certain man in the land of Canaan, the youngest, however, is now with our father, and one is no more." 14 But Joseph said to them, "It is just as I have told you: You are spies! 15 By this you shall be put to the test: unless

your youngest brother comes here, by Pharaoh, You shall not depart from this place! 16 Let one of you go and bring your brother, While the rest of you remain confined, that your words may be put to the test whether there is truth in you. Else, by Pharaoh, you are nothing but spies!" 17 And he confined them in the guardhouse for three days.

18 On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you shall live, for I am a God-fearing man. 19 If you are honest men, let one of you brothers be held in your place of detention, while the rest of you go and take home rations for your starving households; 20 but you must bring me your youngest brother, that your words may be verified and that you may not die." And they did accordingly. 21 They said to one another, "Alas, We are being punished on account of our brother, because we looked on at his anguish, yet paid no heed as he pleaded with us. That is why this distress has come upon us. " 22 Then Reuben spoke up and said to them, "Did I not tell you, 'Do no wrong to the boy'? But you paid no heed. Now comes the reckoning for his blood." 23 They did not know that Joseph understood, for there was an interpreter between him and them. 24 He turned away from them and wept. But he came back to them and spoke to them; and he took Simeon from among them and had him bound before their eyes. 25 Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, return each one's money to his sack, and give them provisions for the journey; and this was done for them. 26 So they loaded their asses with the rations and departed from there.

27 As one of them was opening his sack to give feed to his ass at the night encampment, he saw his money right there at the mouth of his bag. 28 And he said to his brothers, "My money has been returned! It is here in my bag!" Their hearts sank; and, trembling, they turned to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

29 When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had befallen them, saying, 30 "The man who is lord of the land spoke harshly to us and accused us of spying on the land. 31 We said to him, 'We are honest men; We have never been spies! 32 There were twelve of us brothers, sons by the same father; but one is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in the land of Canaan.' 33 But the man who is lord of the land said to us, 'By this I shall know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, and take something for your starving households and be off. 34 And bring your youngest brother to me, that I may know that you are not spies but honest men. I will then restore your brother to you, and you shall be free to move about in the land.'"

35 As they were emptying their sacks, there, in each one's sack, was his money-bag! When they and their father saw their money-bags, they were dismayed. 36 Their father Jacob said to them, "It is always me that you bereave: Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and now you would take away Benjamin. These things always happen to me!" 37 Then Reuben said to his father, "You may kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my care, and I will return him to you." 38 But he said, "My son must

not go down with you, for his brother is dead and he alone is left. If he meets With disaster on the journey you are taking, you will send my white head down to Sheol in grief."

Chapter 43

1 But the famine in the land was severe. 2 And when they they had eaten up the rations which they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again and procure some food for us." 3 But Judah said to him, "The man warned us, 'Do not let me see your faces — unless your brother is with you.' 4 If you will let our brother go with us, we will go down and procure food for you; 5 but if you will not let him go, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'Do not let me see your faces — unless your brother is with you.'" 6 And Israel said, "Why did you serve me so ill as to tell the man that you had another brother?" 7 They replied, "But the man kept asking about us and our family, saying, 'Is your father still living? Have you another brother?' And we answered him accordingly. How were we to know that he would say, 'Bring your brother here'?"

8 Then Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the boy in my care, and let us be on our way, that We may live and not die — you and we and our children. 9 I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible: if I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, I shall stand guilty before you forever.

10 For we could have been there and back twice if we had not dawdled."

11 Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, do this: take some of the choice products of the land in your baggage, and carry them down as a gift for the man — some balm and tonic honey, gum, ladanurn, pistachio nuts, and almonds. 12 And take with you double the money, carrying back with you the money that was replaced in the mouths of your bags; perhaps it was a mistake. 13 Take your brother too; and go back at once to the man. 14 And may El Shaddai dispose the man to mercy toward you, that he may release to you your other brother, as well as Benjamin. As for me, if I am to be bereaved. I shall be bereaved."

15 So the men took that gift, and they took with them double the money as well as Benjamin. They made their way down to Egypt, where they presented themselves to Joseph. 16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, "Take the men into the house; slaughter and prepare an animal, for the men will dine with me at noon." 17 The man did as Joseph said, and he brought the men into Joseph's house. 18 But the men were frightened at being brought into Joseph's house. "It must be," they thought, "because of the money replaced in our bags the first time that we have been brought inside, as a pretext to attack us and seize us as slaves, with our pack animals." 19 So they went up to Joseph's house steward and spoke to him at the entrance of the house. 20 "If you please, my lord," they said, "we came down once before to procure food. 21 But when we arrived at the night encampment and opened our bags, there was each one's money in the mouth of his bag, our money in full. So we have brought it back with us. 22 And we have brought down with us other money to

procure food. We do not know who put the money in our bags." 23 He replied, "All is well with you; do not be afraid. Your God, the God of your father, must have put treasure in your bags for you. I got your payment." And he brought out Simeon to them.

24 Then the man brought the men into Joseph's house; he gave them water to bathe their feet, and he provided feed for their asses. 25 They laid out their gifts to await Joseph's arrival at noon, for they had heard that they were to dine there.

26 When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts that they had brought with them into the house, bowing low before him to the ground. 27 He greeted them, and he said, "How is your aged father of whom you spoke? Is he still in good health?" 28 They replied, "It is well with your servant our father; he is still in good health." And they bowed and made obeisance.

29 Looking about, he saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and asked, "Is this your youngest brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he went on, "May God be gracious to you, my boy." 30 With that, Joseph hurried out, for he was overcome with feeling toward his brother and was on the verge of tears; he went into a room and wept there. 31 Then he washed his face, reappeared, and — now in control of himself — gave the order, "Serve the meal." 32 They served him by himself, and then by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; for the Egyptians could not dine with the Hebrews, since that would be abhorrent to the Egyptians. 33 As they were seated by his direction, from the oldest in the order of his seniority to the youngest in the order of his youth, the men looked at one another in astonishment. 34 Portions were served them from his table; but Benjamin's portion was several times that of anyone else. And they drank their fill with him.

Chapter 44

1 Then he instructed his house steward as follows, "Fill the men's bags with food, as much as they can carry, and put each one's money in the mouth of his bag. 2 Put my silver goblet in the mouth of the bag of the youngest one, together with his money for the rations." And he did as Joseph told him.

3 With the first light of morning, the men were sent off with their pack animals. 4 They had just left the city and had not gone far, when Joseph said to his steward, "Up, go after the men! And when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why did you repay good with evil? 5 It is the very one from which my master drinks and which he uses for divination. It was a wicked thing for you to do!'"

6 He overtook them and spoke those words to them, 7 And they said to him, "Why does my lord say such things? Far be it from your servants to do anything of the kind! 8 Here we brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money that we found in the mouths of our bags. How then could we have stolen any silver or gold from your master's house! 9 Whichever of your servants it is found with shall die; the rest of us,

moreover, shall become slaves to my lord." 10 He replied, "Although what you are proposing is right, only the one with whom it is found shall be my slave; but the rest of you shall go free."

11 So each one hastened to lower his bag to the ground, and each one opened his bag. 12 He searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest; and the goblet turned up in Benjamin's bag. 13 At this they rent their clothes. Each reloaded his pack animal, and they returned to the city.

14 When Judah and his brothers reentered the house of Joseph, who was still there, they threw themselves on the ground before him. 15 Joseph said to them, "What is this deed that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?" 16 Judah replied, "What can we say to my lord? How can we plead, how can we prove our innocence? God has uncovered the crime of your servants. Here we are, then, slaves of my lord, the rest of us as much as he in whose possession the goblet was found." 17 But he replied, "Far be it from me to act thus! Only he in whose possession the goblet was found shall be my slave; the rest of you go back in peace to your father."

Miqeitz

I Kings 3:15 - 3:28

15 Then Solomon awoke: it was a dream! He went to Jerusalem, stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented offerings of well-being; and he made a banquet for all his courtiers.

16 Later two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. 17 The first woman said, "Please, my lord! This woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. 18 On the third day after I was delivered, this woman also gave birth to a child. We were alone; there was no one else with us in the house, just the two of us in the house. 19 During the night this woman's child died, because she lay on it. 20 She arose in the night and took my son from my side while your maidservant was asleep, and laid him in her bosom. 21 When I arose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, it was not the son I had borne."

22 The other woman spoke up, "No, the live one is my son, and the dead one is yours!" But the first insisted, "No, the dead boy is yours; mine is the live one!" And they went on arguing before the king.

23 The king said, "One says, 'This is my son, the live one, and the dead one is yours';

and the other says, 'No, the dead boy is yours, mine is the live one.'" 24 So the king gave the order, "Fetch me a sword." A sword was brought before the king, 25 and the king said, "Cut the live child in two, and give half to one and half to the other."

26 But the woman whose son was the live one pleaded with the king, for she was overcome with compassion for her son. "Please, my lord," she cried, "give her the live child; only don't kill it!" The other insisted, "It shall be neither yours nor mine; cut it in two!" 27 Then the king spoke up. "Give the live child to her," he said, "and do not put it to death; she is its mother."

28 When all Israel heard the decision that the king had rendered, they stood in awe of the king; for they saw that he possessed divine wisdom to execute justice.

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