

Lesson 4: Overcoming Hard Times
GN. 41:28-36,46-49.

- I. Introduction
 - A. Challenging times and storms that come into our life can seem daunting.
 - 1. We are called to trust God in these times.
 - 2. God has plans and wisdom for us.
 - 3. In Joseph's life we are to learn how God used him so that we can see how he wants to use us.
 - II. God reveals himself and his plans to a person. Gn. 41:28,32
 - A. Pharaoh's dream was 7 healthy cows and 7 sickly cows; 7 healthy stalks of grain and 7 poor stalks of grain.
 - 1. His magicians and wise leaders were unable to understand the dream.
 - 2. Pharaoh was commander of the most powerful nation on the earth at his time. He represented an entire span gods.
 - B. The Lord revealed his plans to Joseph.
 - 1. Joseph was of the covenant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (his father).
 - 2. Joseph was turned to the Lord in relationship with him.
 - III. God uses people. Gn. 41:33-36
 - A. God uses people in the bible who have limits, weaknesses, faults and patterns of sin as well as good and strong points, gifts and talents.
 - 1. Joseph was gifted with leadership, administration and interpretation of dreams.
 - 2. He never took these for granted.
 - IV. We can trust God's plans fully no matter how grave the situation. Gn. 41:47-54.
 - A. God gave Joseph direction that emerged out of his gifts and abilities.
 - 1. Joseph engaged the people and the country of Egypt.
 - 2. He applied his gifts and talents and experience to life's situation in Egypt.
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- For reflection:

- 1. In God's dealings with Egypt, what does this tell us about God's character?
- 2. When has God given you a clear picture of what to do?
- 3. Are you aware of the gifts, talents and skills he has given you? Are you using them for His glory and the service of his people.
- 4. How does God use our gifts and talents to prepare for future challenges?