

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE LIFE OF JOSEPH – LESSON 19

JOSEPH SOLIDIFIES PHARAOH'S POWER

We see in Genesis 47:1-12 that Joseph now has Israel safely secured in the best fertile land of Egypt at two years into the great famine of the Middle East. We will now look at the wisdom of how Joseph ruled for the benefit of Pharaoh who honored Joseph like a father. (Genesis 45:8)

During the seven good years Joseph had stored massive amounts of grain, their primary food source. Now seven years of famine were upon them just as God had told him.

Genesis 47:13 begins today's lesson. The famine was very severe in its first year. It affected Egypt and Canaan, and likely most of the Middle East. Joseph began opening storehouses to sell grain for food. Word spread quickly, which is how Jacob had learned of it.

The Egyptians came with money in hand to buy food that first year. They continued to buy until their money was spent, but they were still clamoring for food. They gave Pharaoh their horses, cattle, asses, and any other herds they had. That all happened in the first year.

The second year they had nothing left to offer for food. All money and livestock were gone. They made a different offer. They said in verse 19, ***"Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh. And give us seed, that we may live and not die, that the land be not desolate."*** So, they sold themselves into servitude and gave Pharaoh legal ownership of all the land. The only land that remained with its owner was that which the priests owned because they had special favor with Pharaoh.

This consolidated Pharaoh's power over all of Egypt. Previously, considerable power was wielded by the Lords and Nobles of the land, but their power was now gone. This is what Joseph accomplished for Egypt and Pharaoh.

With Pharaoh's new ownership of the land, as Pharaoh's ruler, Joseph was now able to give Israel the best of the land. A year earlier he would have had no legal authority to give it away.

God had orchestrated everything to bless Israel. He can also orchestrate things in your life for your favor. The timing of it is in His hands.