



# Formation Devotional

February 26, 2020 Evening

Forming Worship, Life, and Ministry Together at Christ Covenant Church

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*Cling to Jesus and rest in him this evening, knowing that the Father sees you and loves you like his only Son. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.*

## Call to Prayer

I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure. (Psalm 16:8-9)

## Opening Prayer

Almighty God, you have revealed to your Church your eternal Being of glorious majesty and perfect love as one God in Trinity of Persons: Give us grace to continue steadfast in the confession of this faith, and constant in our worship of you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (BCP 251)

## Prayer of Examine

Turn your attention to Christ who is present with you now. With him, review the ordinary events and emotions of your day with gratitude.

1. Where did you move with or feel close to Jesus today?
2. Where did you resist or feel far from Jesus today?
3. Where is Jesus leading you tomorrow? Ask for joy as you follow him.

## Praying the Psalms

*Prayerfully read the psalm back to God through faith in Jesus Christ.*

### Psalm 82

#### Rescue the Weak and Needy

*A Psalm of Asaph.*

God has taken his place in the divine council;

in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:

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<sup>2</sup>“How long will you judge unjustly  
and show partiality to the wicked? Selah

<sup>3</sup>Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;  
maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.

<sup>4</sup>Rescue the weak and the needy;  
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

<sup>5</sup>They have neither knowledge nor understanding,  
they walk about in darkness;  
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

<sup>6</sup>I said, “You are gods,  
sons of the Most High, all of you;

<sup>7</sup>nevertheless, like men you shall die,  
and fall like any prince.”

<sup>8</sup>Arise, O God, judge the earth;  
for you shall inherit all the nations!

## Old Testament Reading

*Genesis gives the account of creation, and the reason why it is so amazing and so corrupt at the same time. The original intent of God for mankind is revealed: God creates the earth for mankind, and mankind for God. Though things go wrong in the beginning, God promises the nomad Abraham that there would be a people who would know Him and walk in His ways in the midst of a broken and rebellious world. The rest of Genesis unfolds in the way God forms this people in the ancient world.*

*As you read and reflect on this passage, prayerfully consider how God might be revealing himself to you this evening.*

## Genesis 41

### Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams

After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, <sup>2</sup>and behold, there came up out of the Nile seven cows, attractive and plump, and they fed in the reed grass. <sup>3</sup>And behold,

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seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. <sup>4</sup>And the ugly, thin cows ate up the seven attractive, plump cows. And Pharaoh awoke. <sup>5</sup>And he fell asleep and dreamed a second time. And behold, seven ears of grain, plump and good, were growing on one stalk. <sup>6</sup>And behold, after them sprouted seven ears, thin and blighted by the east wind. <sup>7</sup>And the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump, full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream. <sup>8</sup>So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

<sup>9</sup>Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "I remember my offenses today. <sup>10</sup>When Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, <sup>11</sup>we dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own interpretation. <sup>12</sup>A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream. <sup>13</sup>And as he interpreted to us, so it came about. I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged."

<sup>14</sup>Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. <sup>15</sup>And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." <sup>16</sup>Joseph answered Pharaoh, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer." <sup>17</sup>Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Behold, in my dream I was standing on the banks of the Nile. <sup>18</sup>Seven cows, plump and attractive, came up out of the Nile and fed in the reed grass. <sup>19</sup>Seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and thin, such as I had never seen in all the land of Egypt. <sup>20</sup>And the thin, ugly cows ate up the first seven plump cows, <sup>21</sup>but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were still as ugly as at the beginning. Then I awoke. <sup>22</sup>I also saw in my dream seven ears growing on one stalk, full and good. <sup>23</sup>Seven ears, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprouted after them, <sup>24</sup>and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. And I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."

<sup>25</sup>Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. <sup>26</sup>The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. <sup>27</sup>The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. <sup>28</sup>It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. <sup>29</sup>There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, <sup>30</sup>but after them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume the land, <sup>31</sup>and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. <sup>32</sup>And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about. <sup>33</sup>Now therefore let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. <sup>34</sup>Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years. <sup>35</sup>And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. <sup>36</sup>That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine."

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## Joseph Rises to Power

<sup>37</sup>This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. <sup>38</sup>And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" <sup>39</sup>Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. <sup>40</sup>You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you." <sup>41</sup>And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." <sup>42</sup>Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. <sup>43</sup>And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. <sup>44</sup>Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." <sup>45</sup>And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

<sup>46</sup>Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. <sup>47</sup>During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, <sup>48</sup>and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. <sup>49</sup>And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.

<sup>50</sup>Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore them to him. <sup>51</sup>Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." <sup>52</sup>The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

<sup>53</sup>The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end, <sup>54</sup>and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. <sup>55</sup>When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do."

<sup>56</sup>So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. <sup>57</sup>Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

## Prayers of Thanksgiving

### Church Community

- Thank God for the caring spirit displayed in the deacons at Christ Covenant as they come alongside congregants in times of hardship.
- Thank God for sending his church to make disciples of all nations. Thank him for the faith and courage with which Christians suffer persecution.
- Thank God for the indomitable gospel movement already on the rise. Thank him for being the author and perfecter of our faith and of the spiritual revival in our city.

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O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen. (BCP 833)

## **Benediction**

Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel. (Luke 2:29-32)

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*Wonder what your next step in spiritual formation is? Consider getting involved in a Growth Group.*

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