

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Let's pray...

[Gen 39:1-23 NKJV] 1 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. 2 **The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. 3 And his master **saw that the LORD [was] with him** and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. 4 So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then**

he made him overseer of his house, and all [that] he had he put under his authority. 5 So it was, from the time [that] he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field. 6 Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. **Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.**

In chapter 37, we were introduced to Joseph.

God had given him two dreams.

In one of the dreams his brothers are bowing before him as grain in the field.

In the next dream, his father and mother are joining his brothers in bowing down before him.

Ten of his other brothers hated his guts. In fact they plotted to kill him.

Eventually, they strip Joseph of his coat and they sell him to Ishmaelites that were on their way to Egypt –

Joseph – the one who Jacob loved more than the others, the one who Jacob was leaning on giving his blessing to –

Joseph is now a slave.

Time has passed from the last time we saw Joseph.

In fact, if you do the math, the scriptures tell us that he was

17 in chapter 37, when Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over

Egypt the scriptures tell us that Joseph was 30. In the next

chapter we are going to see Joseph spend two years in prison.

So this means that Joseph is 28 years old here in chapter 39. That means that he has spent the last eleven years of his life as a slave.

It is hard to imagine what must have been going through the mind of Joseph during this time period.

Remember, he came from a wealthy family – he was set to inherit flocks of animals. He had done nothing wrong – he had done nothing to deserve the actions of his brothers.

Many people, if placed in Joseph's sandals would choose to simply wallow in self-pity.

Why me? Why me?

Others would simply spend their days allowing themselves to be consumed with anger and bitterness.

However Joseph has a difference response.

He decides to place his trust in the Lord.

This is what sustains Joseph through all of his trials.

No matter what the circumstances were, he was going to trust in the Lord.

So here at the start of the chapter, we find Joseph living in the house of Potiphar.

Now, the scriptures tell us that Potiphar was the captain of the guard – meaning that he was a very prominent figure in Egypt.

Potiphar was the equivalent to the Head of the Secret Service in our government.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word that is used for officer in our text means eunuch or one who is castrated. And it was very common for rulers during these days to castrate the men who worked in the palace so that they wouldn't defile the many wives of the ruler – in this case Pharaoh.

Now, I want you to make note of how many times in our text tonight, we find the words, and the LORD was with Joseph.

The first time we see it here in this chapter is in verse 2 and then it is followed with, and he was a successful man – and it is referring to Joseph.

If you have a copy of the KJV, it says that he was a very prosperous man.

But Joseph is in a foreign land, he doesn't know the language, he doesn't know the culture, he doesn't have freedom, he is a slave.

Listen church, God's will is that we may be blessed – even in the place of our adversity.

Many people have the mindset that we cannot be truly blessed unless we are in control – unless we are calling the shots – unless we are financially secure – unless we have the perfect house with the white picket fence around it.

After all, that is what the world defines as success right???

However, Jesus lived and taught us a better way. He taught us to find success as a servant.

We just read this following verse last Sunday morning...

[Mar 9:35 NKJV] 35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

Many times, we place our focus on our hardships that we fail to realize that God has been blessing us all along.

That is what is happening to Joseph.

Even though he has been wronged, even though he might not understand the circumstances around him, he simply places his trust on the Lord and makes the most of where God has placed him.

And, we can be assured that God had His hand on Potiphar purchasing Joseph from the Ishmaelites.

And Joseph worked hard and he was faithful to Potiphar and Potiphar noticed that the Lord was with Joseph.

And the more responsibilities that he gave Joseph, the more he was blessed.

Application #1

As we read through these verses, I am pretty sure that many of us are identifying with Joseph.

That is what we do – we want to identify ourselves with the hero of the story.

And I do believe that the life of Joseph is a wonderful example for us to learn from.

We are called to serve God diligently wherever He puts us.

We are called to trust Him no matter what the circumstances around us might dictate, just like Joseph.

However, I think we should also consider being more like Potiphar.

I have mentioned several times that Joseph is a type or a picture of Jesus in the Old Testament.

Jesus Christ is the Servant of All, the more we surrender to Him to manage or oversee, the more we will be blessed.

The problem with us is that our flesh will not allow us to relinquish certain aspects of our lives to Jesus.

Potiphar relinquished control because he trusted Joseph.

Do we trust Jesus to be the overseer of our house?

Or do we have aspects of our lives where we don't allow Him in?

Ok, Jesus, you are the overseer of my house except when it come to the way I raise my children or my finances or my social life.

Think of the blessing that we are losing because of this.

In the end of verse six, the scriptures, out of nowhere, point out that Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

He was a stud – he must have gotten it from his mother because the scriptures tell us that Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance as well.

In scripture we find many women that are described as beautiful: Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel who I just mentioned

are just a few, but there are only three men that are described as handsome. Joseph is one of them.

David and Absalom.

Why do the scriptures mention that Joseph was handsome – I think we will find out in the next few verses.

7 And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what [is] with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 "[There is] no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you [are] his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Mrs. Potiphar attempts to seduce Joseph.

However, Joseph refuses. Not only does he refuse, he provides multiple reasons as to why it is not a good idea.

1. Joseph is looking at the consequences and he does not want to lose the trust that Potiphar has in him. In scriptures we have example after example of individuals who did not consider the consequences of their actions.

Adam and Eve

King David when he slept with Bathsheba

2. Morally Joseph knew it was wrong. **How then can I do this great wickedness?** Joseph identified adultery with what it is – sin.

Church, we live in a generation where sin isn't identified as sin. Adultery has been replaced with words like fling or affair or hook up.

3. Most importantly, Joseph saw it as a sin against God.

We have seen over and over the phrase, and the Lord was with Joseph in this chapter. God's presence protected Joseph and His presence also prevented Joseph from sinning against God. Joseph had the fear of God in him.

Not that God was going to punish him – but that he would hurt God by his disobedience.

10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her [or] to be with her.

Church, just because we overcome temptation today, it doesn't mean that we won't face the same temptation over again. Satan uses different tactics to tempt us.

11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house [was] inside, 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.

So here we see Joseph being tempted once again – this time no one is around. This time she is putting her hands on him.

What did Joseph do? – He fled the temptation. He didn't stick around and flirt with Mrs. Potiphar or entertain the offer from her.

[1Co 10:13 NKJV] 13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God [is] faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear [it].

Every time we are tempted, God has given us an avenue to flee.

Whether we take that avenue / that way out is up to you and me.

Once again, I have to remind you that temptation is not a sin.

Jesus was tempted. But, He did not give into the temptation.

13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, 14 that she called

to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. 15 "And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside." 16 So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. 17 Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, **"The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me;** 18 "so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside."

Mrs. Potiphar falsely accuses Joseph of trying to seduce her.

And at the end of verse 17, it appears that she is blaming

Potiphar for the problem.

Notice what she says - **The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us.**

No wonder Potiphar was never home.

Just like Adam blaming God in the Garden of Eden - "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

19 So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused. 20 Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners [were] confined. And he was there in the prison. 21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the

keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who [were] in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything [that was] under [Joseph's] authority, **because the LORD was with him**; and whatever he did, the LORD made [it] prosper.

In verse 19, we are told that Potiphar is angry. But we are not told who Potiphar is angry with. Is it Joseph or is it Mrs. Potiphar?

The consequences of a slave attempting to rape the wife of his master would certainly be death. But Potiphar simply places Joseph in prison and once again we see the presence of the Lord in the life of Joseph. Now, Joseph is in charge of the prisoners at the prison.

[Gen 40:1-23 NKJV] 1 It came to pass after these things [that] the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. 2 And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. 3 So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph [was] confined. 4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while.

Here in chapter 40, we are introduced to the butler and the baker.

The butler during these times was not what we think of a butler in our times.

The butler was a cupbearer – he is the one who would drink from Pharaoh’s cup to make sure that the drink wasn’t poisoned. The baker handled the food.

Pharaoh was angry with them – most likely because there was an apparent poisoning attempt on his life, so Pharaoh sends both of them to the same prison that Potiphar ran.

And it was the same prison where Joseph was responsible for the prisoners.

So, here God has placed Joseph in the prison so that he will be introduced to the butler and the baker.

I asked you guys to underline verse four where it says that

Joseph served them - Though Joseph had a position of high

authority in the prison, notice that he did not use it to make

others serve him. He used his high position to serve others.

5 Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who [were] confined in the prison, had a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night [and] each man's dream with its [own] interpretation. 6 And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they [were] sad. 7 So he asked Pharaoh's officers who [were] with him in the custody of his lord's house, saying, "Why do you look [so] sad today?" 8 And they said to him, "We each have had a dream, and [there is] no interpreter of it." So Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell [them] to me, please."

God has already spoken to Joseph in a dream and earlier in the book of Genesis we saw that he spoke to Jacob in a dream.

It's always important to remember that not every dream is a revelation from God.

Sometimes we get dreams because our mind is busy or we ate enchiladas.

Joseph knows that if these dreams indeed do come from God, then God is the only one who would be able to interpret them.

The reason that he asks the baker and the butler to tell him their dreams is so that God will reveal the interpretation to him. Joseph cannot interpret dreams on his own.

9 Then the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "Behold, in my dream a vine [was] before me, 10 "and in the vine [were] three branches; it [was] as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes. 11 "Then Pharaoh's cup [was] in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand." 12 And Joseph said to him, "This [is] the interpretation of it: The three branches [are] three days. 13 "Now within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your place, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler. 14 "But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness

to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house. 15 "For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon."

So the butler tells Joseph the dream and God gives Joseph the interpretation. The butler will be restored to his old position.

Once he provides the butler with the interpretation he tells the butler to remember him once everything is back to normal.

16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also [was] in my dream, and there [were] three white baskets on my head. 17 "In the uppermost basket [were] all kinds of baked goods for

Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head." 18 So Joseph answered and said, "This [is] the interpretation of it: The three baskets [are] three days. 19 "Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head from you and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you."

Now the baker sees the butler receive a good interpretation so now he wants his dream interpreted. He is hoping that his dream will be positive too.

Unfortunately, his dream reveals that he is about to die.

20 Now it came to pass on the third day, [which was] Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. 21 Then he

restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. 22 But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. 23 Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

Just as Joseph had interpreted, in three days the butler was reinstated to the king's court but the baker was hanged – however the butler did not remember Joseph - so he remained in prison.

Joseph was hoping that the butler would be his way out of prison, but it just wasn't meant to be. God had other plans.

While Joseph was going through an assortment of trials, God's plan was being fulfilled.

God allowed Joseph to experience hardship in order to build character, faith, and spiritual maturity. That's a valuable lesson to learn from the life of Joseph.

If Joseph had not been accused of rape by Potiphar's wife, he would never had ended up in jail –

if he had never ended up in jail, he never would have met the baker and the butler-

if he would never had met them, he would never had gotten the opportunity to interpret their dreams

if he never would have interpreted their dreams, he would never had gotten to receive the opportunity to interpret

Pharaoh's dream.

If he had never interpreted Joseph's dream, he would never have been named prime minister of Egypt.

He would never have had the opportunity to save his family from the famine.

And if his family had died, the Messiah would never have been born.

And without a Messiah – we would all be dead in our sins.

Always remember that God prepares those He intends to use.

The preparation may be a slow and it may be painful – but I think we can find encouragement in the life of Joseph that through these times, God will still be with us.

Amen.

Let's pray...

